

Religious Practices and Christianization of the Late Antique City (4th–7th cent.)

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Religious Practices and Christianization of the Late Antique City (4th–7th cent.)

Edited by

Aude Busine



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Introduction: Religious Practices and Christianization of the Late Antique City

Aude Busine

In modern scholarship, Christianity and the classical city, which constitutes the original founding element of Greco-Roman civilization,¹ are often deemed to be incompatible. The *communis opinio* may be summarized in Mogens Hansen's assertion that the *polis*, with its polytheistic cults and events, was a Pagan institution in which worthy Christians could take no part.² More generally, Voltaire's idea³ of a causal relationship between two distinct historical phenomena, viz. the conversion to Christianity and the end of the Ancient World, prevails in a significant number of studies of Late Antiquity.⁴ The confusion encourages one to reassess the relationships between those two key events. This volume, which results from the conference on "Religious Practices and Christianization of the Late Antique City" held at the Université libre de Bruxelles from January 19 to 21, 2012, seeks to study the phenomenon of the Christianization of the Roman Empire within the context of the transformations and eventual decline of the Greco-Roman city. The studies brought together here aim to describe with greater precision the possible links between religious, but also political, economic and social mutations engendered by Christianity and the evolution of the antique city. More particularly, an effort will be made to measure the impact on the city of the progressive abandonment of traditional cults to the advantage of new Christian religious practices. The papers in this volume will cast a new light on the intersection between the Christianization of the Roman Empire and the progressive disappearance of the municipal civilization characteristic of Greco-Roman Antiquity. It is hoped that this Introduction, though not intended to offer an exhaustive

1 Cf. Inglebert (2005) 22–30; Loseby (2009).

2 Hansen (2008) 169. Cf. Liebeschuetz (2001) 247–248.

3 Voltaire (1769) chap. XL, 255: "Le christianisme ouvrait le ciel mais il perdait l'Empire". See after him Gibbon (1776 [1906]), according to which the Church had destroyed "the solid fabric of human greatness" (xxix).

4 For an analysis of the theme of decadence, cf. Mazzarino (1959); Schiavone (1996).

historiographical overview, will nevertheless lay the foundations on which the issues to be pursued further in the different papers of the volume can be based.

1 Christianization and the Evolution of the City

Whether viewed from the perspective of history or historiography, the Christianization of the Ancient World is as complex a phenomenon as it is significant. Its complexity is due, among others, to the fact that the term “Christianization” refers both to the process and to its result.⁵ Studies of the Christianization of the Roman Empire have long been characterized by a triumphant discourse focusing on the conversion of individuals, especially on the theological, moral and psychological causes of these conversions.⁶ The phenomenon has also been abundantly studied from the perspective of the progressive recognition of Christianity as the state religion. Historical markers as Constantine, Theodosius and Justinian have here been used as a model to explain how populations of the Empire were incited, often through political coercion, to move from one religion to another.⁷ Recent studies, however, have tended to play down the impact of Constantine’s conversion in the progress of Christianity and called into question the actual effects of anti-Pagan legislation.⁸

The Christianization of the Ancient World in its relationship to the city deserves a particular attention, while it is especially there, in the cities, that Christianity was to develop. From the 4th century onwards, the creation of a Christian Empire entailed not only a change in the religious faith, beliefs and practices of the inhabitants, but also implied a total overhaul of traditional culture and society. The Christian attitude towards the earthly city, to be replaced by the Celestial City, was more ambivalent than prevailing attitudes in the 3rd century.⁹ One might say that the universalist scope and eschatological dimension of the new religion made it an unlikely candidate for a civic religion.¹⁰ However, Christian authorities, encouraged by the new imperial measures, soon understood that they could not realize their proselytizing and

5 Cf. the terminological analysis in Inglebert (2010) 9.

6 Cf. the historiographical assessment established in Inglebert (2010).

7 Cf. MacMullen (1997) 1–52; and more recently Veyne (2007).

8 Cf. Baslez (2008). Regarding the vitality of traditional cults, cf. Gregory (1986); Whitby (1991); Chuvin (2004²) 135–152; Jones (2014).

9 Cf. Sandwell (2007) 132–136.

10 Cf. C. Sotinel’s contribution to this volume.

moral mission if they did not invest in the cities' territory and appropriate their sphere of influence.

It must be remembered that in the 4th century, *poleis* and *ciuitates* were still the basic units in the political, social and cultural organization of the Empire's inhabitants, notwithstanding the restrictions imposed on their autonomy by the successive reforms of Diocletian and Constantine.¹¹ From an institutional viewpoint, the community life was still ruled by the tripartite structure Assembly-Council-Magistrates. Admittedly, following its western counterpart, the *curia*, the *boulè* had become a wealth-based and hereditary structure, comprising permanent members born of the great notable families, whereas the Assembly of citizens' role was in most cases confined to formally approving, through acclamation, the decisions worked out by the Council and the Magistrates.¹² Yet, in the 4th century, the identity of an inhabitant of the Empire was still grounded in his urban citizenship and mode of life, and in his participation—albeit tacit—in the common decision-making. As in earlier centuries, each city was still proud of its origins and jealous of its prerogatives.¹³ Each city's specific culture, the foundation of its organization and legitimacy, was kept well alive and made manifest through mythological scenes publicly displayed throughout the city or echoed in the discourses of the Third Sophistic's orators like Libanius. The administrative, political and economic structures required for the management of the public good were concentrated in the urban centre. Through the visibility and monumental nature of these structures, the city-center became the material symbol of the civic community. As a consequence, the habits the city came to reflect the ideal of urban life, to the extent where the city and town are often regarded as synonymous. It is this physical and cultural environment that the Christians sought to appropriate and make compatible with the practice of their religion.

In order to offer a full assessment of the range of mutations engendered by the progressive integration of Christianity, it should first be recalled that those who were labelled as "pagans" or "polytheists" by Christians do not represent an actual and well-defined group, but multiple and polymorphic communities who would never have defined themselves as such.¹⁴ We should therefore underscore the permeability of the groups opposed in the apologetic

11 Cf. B. Ward-Perkins, (1998 [2009⁸]).

12 Cf. Jones (1971); Roueché (1984); Liebeschuetz (2001) 124–136.

13 As it illustrated by the telling example of Orcistus, cf. Jacques (1992).

14 Cf. Jones (2012).

and dogmatic approaches.¹⁵ Likewise, ancient Christian religions should not be reduced to a homogeneous and uniform system, studied in terms of Christianity as it is known today. It is necessary to distinguish a multiplicity of Christianities, varying with time and geographical location.¹⁶

Modern specialists in the Greek-speaking world, more strongly committed to the idea of decline, have tended to analyse the evolution of the late antique *polis* against the glory of the classical Greek city, notably its autonomy and its democratic ideas. The changing relationships between people and elites, such as Louis Robert observed in Greek cities as early as the 3rd century BCE,¹⁷ would thus point to the influence of a Roman model on Greek civic life.¹⁸ In this way the history of the *polis* in Late Antiquity—that only an empty shell would have remained—, boils down to an analysis of what disappeared, especially in institutional and social terms, or of what was to survive in the Byzantine world.¹⁹ In contrast, scholarship on the municipal life of the western provinces has emphasized the originality and strength of the Late Antique city, possibly because in this region of the Empire the *polis* appeared later and disappeared earlier.²⁰

In recent decades, historians have attributed the causes of the decline of the Late Antique city to factors like the loss of political autonomy, a decrease in economic activity, the destructions caused by wars or natural injuries, the desertion of the notables, the decline in euergetism, the fiscal burdens imposed on the cities, the centralization of the administration, and the takeover of local structures by ecclesiastical authorities.²¹ More positive changes brought to the civic institutions by the shift in religions have already been studied: e.g., the commitment of bishops to the governments of their cities,²² the evolution of administration,²³ the creation of new charity institutions,²⁴ and the insertion of Christianity into the fabric of cities.²⁵ Analyzing the different religious

15 Cf. Beard, North, Price (1998) 364–388; Fredriksen (2003); Lavan (2011) li–lii; Rebillard (2012); Frankfurter (2005).

16 Cf. Markus (1990); Brown (1996); Gwynn, Bangert (2010). For the notion of local religion, see Frankfurter (2005).

17 Robert (1960) 325.

18 Cf. Heller (2009).

19 Cf. Harland (2006); van Nijf, Alston, Williamson (2013).

20 Cf. Lepelley (1979); Lepelley (1992); Harries (1992); Leone (2013).

21 Cf. Jones (1940); Liebeschuetz (1992); Liebeschuetz (2001).

22 Cf. Rapp (2005).

23 Cf. Dagron (1974); Delmaire (1989).

24 Cf. Daley (1999); Brown (2012).

25 Cf. the series directed by Pietri (1986–2007); Bauer (2008).

practices as the authors do in this volume will aim to complete the picture and to diagnose the evolving dynamics at work within the city.

2 Secularization and Christianization in the Cities

In applying the sociologists' notion of the "profane" to Late Antique society, the works of Robert Markus and Peter Brown have laid the foundations for an ever-growing discussion on the religious evolution of the city in the Late Antique Roman Empire.²⁶ They suggested that the end of the monopoly of traditional civic religion engendered the emergence of a secular realm, a sphere which could be shared by the totality of citizens regardless of their religious allegiance. According to Peter Brown, the notion of the secular is even characteristic of the Late Antique world, which witnessed the development of a public culture in which all citizens could take part.²⁷ As Claude Lepelley has shown for Late Roman Africa,²⁸ the city seems to have become by the third century a neutral space, freed of religious references, whose consensus on a common set of values allowed to englobe all of the civic community. Relegating the religious dimension into the sphere of the private should not to be confused with a form of religious tolerance, but must rather be seen as reflecting the concern of local elites to keep managing cities whose organisation would remain unchanged.²⁹

Markus explains that, once religious competition no longer constituted a threat to the Church, the secular sphere progressively shrunk, making room for the sacred.³⁰ This desecularization was to give rise to a society based on religious unity, such as would develop in the Byzantine Empire and the Western Middle Age. According to Claire Sotinel, on the other hand, the secular sphere never totally disappeared from the Christian society's scene, except in crisis situations that were limited in time and space.³¹ In her view, "the only city from which the secular would be altogether absent is the Celestial City".³² The secular would, rather, have moved into spheres that were irrelevant to the Christian

26 Cf. the overview offered by Rebillard, Sotinel (2010).

27 Brown (1980a); Brown (1995) 40–54.

28 Cf. Lepelley (2002).

29 On the role played by the elites in the late antique cities, see Kotula (1982).

30 Cf. Markus (1980); Markus (1990).

31 C. Sotinel (2010).

32 *Ibid.*, 349.

religion, i.e. spectacles, market-places, and where the bishop could wield no direct authority over the Christians' moral behavior.

Studies on the secularization of the city have drawn their data mainly from three domains. They have, first of all, observed the emergence of secular literary and artistic expressions, in which the mythological references were no longer regarded as manifestations of an idolatrous polytheistic religion, but as elements of a common cultural background.³³ The adoption of this secular culture allowed the elites, even the Christian ones, to keep relying on the social function of classical education.³⁴

Secondly, historians and archaeologists have noted the visibility of the religious in the urban texture and the phenomenon of desacralization of traditional places of worship.³⁵ The re-employment of former temples for secular purposes reflects the ambiguity in Christian policies toward old religious buildings.³⁶ The Christian authorities, while denouncing the temples as associated with demons and their worship, made a point of maintaining an artistic and urban heritage, an object of pride for citizens throughout the Empire.³⁷

The third subject, particularly productive for the study of secularization of Ancient civilization, resides in the spectacles, which were extremely popular throughout Late Antiquity despite the violent censure of a number of Christian preachers who denounced their idolatrous and immoral character.³⁸ From the 4th century onwards, the spectacles, whether financed by local elites or by emperors, were progressively dissociated from the rites that traditionally accompanied them. These events, which gathered the communities at regular intervals, were an opportunity to provide the established powers with a *posteriori* justification.³⁹ As symbols of the urban (as opposed to barbarian) civilization, these spectacles constituted, still in Late Antiquity, a powerful factor of civic unity, transcending religious divisions. According to Hervé Inglebert, it is thanks to this medium that some form of participation in citizenship was to survive until the 6th century.⁴⁰ The French historian explains that for reasons more fiscal than religious, Justinian confiscated the revenues to be devoted to

33 Cf. Liebeschuetz (1995) 193–208; Lepelley (2010) 477–492.

34 Cf. Bowersock (1990) 1–13; Cameron (2011) 353–360; Elm (2012).

35 Cf. Caseau (2001); Hahn, Emmel, Gotter (2008).

36 Cf. Ward-Perkins (1999); Jacobs (2014).

37 Cf. Saradi-Mendelovici (1990) 47–61; Jacobs (2013).

38 Cf. Lim (1994); Dugast (2007); Belayche (2007).

39 Cicero (*Pro Sestio* 50–54) already saw in these spectacles one of the means, beside the assemblies, through which the people could make its voice heard. Cf. Buc (1997) 67–73.

40 Inglebert (2005) 103–109, 407–408.

the spectacles, and thus brought to an end the possibility of participation in the ritualized consensus uniting the emperor with all inhabitants of the Empire.

3 Religious Practices and the Christianization of the Cities

The issue of religious practices has received surprisingly little attention in the studies of secularization and Christianization of the city. Yet, the various forms of worship appear to be good indicators of the internal evolution of the society, for the traditional cults always played a decisive role in the functioning of the city as well as in the construction of civic identities.⁴¹ The different devotional acts, whether sacrifices, prayers, processions, festivals or the consultation of oracles, provided the civic community with a sense of cohesion transcending legal distinctions, since they involved women and children as well. In this manner the public manifestations of religion were both a factor in and a result of the hierarchization of Antique society. The cults provided the civic community with an opportunity to gather in common practices and discourses that allowed them to position themselves in space and time, and with regard to the gods as well as to other human communities. In a system where “doing is believing”, to use John Scheid’s felicitous phrase,⁴² the issue of personal adherence was not a relevant one for Greeks and Romans. The one thing that did count was respect for the contract that linked devotees to the divinities protecting their home and city as well as to those of Rome and the emperors. In contrast, adherence to Christianity demanded a personal choice and commitment, opening up new dimensions like faith, repentance and morality. It must also be remembered that the demand to worship only one God was altogether foreign to Greco-Roman religions.⁴³ In what Peter Berger, and John North after him, have called the “religious supermarket”,⁴⁴ each human could participate in as many forms of worship as he chose, in addition to the civic cults. In contrast, becoming a Christian entailed (in theory) not only observance of new initiation and sacrificial rites like baptism and the Eucharist, but also unconditional renunciation of all those practices that were deemed idolatrous.

41 Cf. Polignac (1995), which demonstrates the importance of worship practices in the phenomenon of the cities’ emergence.

42 Scheid (2005).

43 Note the reticence of some scholars to use the term *monotheism* to refer to the religious aspirations outside Judaism and Christianity. See Barnes (2001); Chaniotis (2010) 112–114.

44 Berger (1969) 137; North (1992).

In his book *The End of Sacrifice*, Guy Stroumsa has highlighted the fundamental role played by that central act of traditional piety, the blood sacrifice.⁴⁵ This external public rite, in which all shared, he argues, yielded to an internal form of religion, based on confessional adherence and the silent reading of revealed texts. According to Stroumsa it is ancient Judaism that carried the seeds of this new “souci de soi” (as Michel Foucault called it), for Judaism inspired major Christian concepts like the resurrection of the flesh and divine incarnation. It is this revolution that might have triggered the displacement of the sacred towards the realm of the private. Stroumsa himself situates the shift from a civic religion towards a community-based one among the consequences of the end of sacrifice.⁴⁶

The task remains, then, to bring together these ideas with studies of other traditional forms of devotion practised in the Late Antique city. Blood sacrifice seems to constitute a separate case inasmuch as it is the religious practice that the Christian authorities unanimously and most virulently condemned.⁴⁷ It must be remembered that it was precisely this categorical refusal to perform sacrifices to the Roman gods and emperor that distinguished Christians from other cults in the Empire. It seems necessary, therefore, to investigate the development of unity in civic worship via forms of religious behaviour less stigmatized by Christian ideology, and whose permanence and evolution can be better observed.

It is known that other practices, such as the offering of lamps, the consultation of oracular shrines, ritual acclamations to a unique deity or the veneration of angels, were followed both by people who defined themselves as Christians and people who did not.⁴⁸ Elsewhere, there may have been an *interpretatio christiana* of traditional religious practices: Nicole Belayche has suggested that the spring festival celebrated by the Christians in Gaza in May under the name “Day of the Roses” may have been a Christianized version of the traditional Roman *Rosalia* festival.⁴⁹ In a number of cases, it has been possible to explain the overlap between religious practices, whether in the form of coinciding festival dates or the replacement, in a place of worship, of an old deity by a Saint with similar virtues or attributes,⁵⁰ as an attempt by Christians to take over and adapt popular cults, without which the conversion of Gentiles would not have

45 Stroumsa (2005).

46 *Ibid.*, 147–186.

47 See Nasrallah (2011). For a reassessment, see Ullucci (2012).

48 Cf. Aune (1983); Rothaus (2000) 41–63; Mitchell (1999); Belayche (2010); Cline (2011).

49 Belayche (2004) 17.

50 Cf. Perrin (1995); Pietri (1997).

been possible. However, as Peter Brown has pointed out for the cult of martyrs,⁵¹ this model of borrowing, whose origins lie in the *Religionsgeschichtliche Schule*, can not be applied to every case. For instance, the coincidence of incubation, which had long taken place in Asclepius' sanctuaries but also developed around Christian martyrs' tombs, proves to be more complex than models of simple adoption suppose, both in terms of the chronology and the religious significance of incubation.⁵²

And finally, some traditional public feasts like the Lupercalia survived without being Christianized but lost their overt religious character.⁵³ This festival was very popular in Late Antique Rome, albeit decried by uncompromising Christians, probably less because of their allegedly "pagan" origins than the risks they posed to the social order.

New initiatory and sacrificial rites like baptism and Eucharist were originally practised in the private context, on the margins of the public life and with little interaction with civic life. Nevertheless, the regular gathering of the faithful in growing churches did have an impact on life in the city. John Chrysostom goes so far as to claim that his church in Antioch, a locus of virtue and salvation, should be substituted for the *agora*, the nerve centre of the classical *polis*' economic, social and political life. To the preacher, the *agora* appeared as a place of debauchery and perdition much like theatres and hippodromes.⁵⁴ He deplores, however, that the Church, having become for some a new locus of social interaction, had also become the scene of activities foreign to its religious calling, as Christians went there to talk, conduct business, and even to meet women.⁵⁵ Whatever the bishop's judgment, we can observe here that regular meetings in churches did have an impact on civic habits in the urban sphere, since a number of functions essential to the city's life previously performed in a public space, were now shifting to a space reserved to the members of a religion they had chosen.

Moreover, the impact of Christianity in the cities must not be restricted to the consequences of performing rites within the enclosed space of the churches. Post-Constantine Christianity acquired increasing visibility in the city through Christianization of the institution of the *adventus*.⁵⁶ Just as in

51 Brown (1980b).

52 Cf. Wiśniewski (2013); Graf (2013).

53 Cf. Lançon (2000) 95–96. On the de-paganization of public cults, see J. Hahn's contribution to this volume.

54 Cf. Lavan (2007).

55 Cf. the passages cited by Lavan (2007) 167 n. 55.

56 Cf. Markus (1990) 85–135; Sotinel (2000).

the evolution of pilgrimages to the Holy Land,⁵⁷ the development of the cult of martyrs and their relics gave rise to new forms of religious performance. At the occasion of the annual *panegyris* celebrating a saint, the clergy organized processions linking a church to a *martyrium* outside the city walls. During these events, which were accompanied by festivities, hymns, prayers and fasting, the visible presence and performance of a new hierarchy in society allowed the Christian bishops to manifest the new social order that they sought to impose.⁵⁸ Other processions organized for special occasions like the nomination of a new bishop, ecumenical festivals like Easter or the *translatio* of a Saint's relics provided additional opportunities to give the civic territory of both city and countryside a new cohesion in a Christian frame. It is known that the classical processions would stop at stations in front of symbolic places in the city like the *bouleuterion*, thus strengthening the links between the participants and the city's institutions.⁵⁹ And the establishment of new itineraries for the Christian processions had consequences for the city's customs and thus community life as a whole.⁶⁰

An episode in the *Life of Porphyry* of Gaza (§ 20–21) shows that the successive processions of rival religious groups within the city confines could spark conflicts between the communities. And the example of the *translatio* of Babylas' body from Daphne to Antioch city center constitutes evidence that a procession could be instituted by some Christians in the context of a fierce competition with an existing cult, in this case, the Apollo oracle at Daphne: in the mid-4th century, the martyr's body had been brought and buried in a chapel near Apollo's temple. Emperor Julian attributed the silence of the oracle to the presence of the Saint's relics and then removed his *martyrium* from Daphne. According to Ammianus Marcellinus (22.13.3), the fire of the temple in 362 was caused by a priest having left a candle burning, suggesting that the temple was still in use at that time. All Christian sources considered the unexpected ruin of the temple as a sign of the victory of Christianity.⁶¹

These new festive occasions progressively took over the role of the traditional calendar which had until then always determined the rhythm of all

57 Cf. Kötting (1950).

58 Cf. Leemans (2003) 11–21.

59 On the importance of the itinerary and stations of the ancient processions, cf. Rogers (1991).

60 Cf. Baldovin (1987).

61 J. Chrys., *De S. Babyla c. Iulian.* 93; Theodor., *Hist. eccl.* 3. 11. 4–5. On this episode, see Carruthers (2002); Shepardson (2014) 58–90.

of the civic community.⁶² In this respect, one may consider that the cults worshipping local martyrs and Saints fulfilled a number of functions of the cults which had structured every city's life since Ancient times.⁶³

The visibility of the new places of worship also allowed Christian authorities to redesign the symbolic outlines of the city. John Chrysostom, for instance, affirmed that the true ramparts of the city of Antioch were constituted by the *martyria* situated on its outskirts.⁶⁴ By the same token, the Christian practice of inhumation *ad sanctos* in the very city centre reflected not only a novel conception of death but also a new conception of the urban space.⁶⁵ The Christian processions which moved throughout Constantinople, spreading prayers and incense, clearly aimed at turning traditional civic places like the agora, the hippodrome or the main streets of the city into places filled, as John Chrysostom described them, by the presence of the Holy Spirit, and therefore entirely devoted to the practice of the Christian religion.⁶⁶

4 Towards a Christian City?

All in all, it appears that the study of the evolution of the religious practices in the city requires qualification of the assumption of plain incompatibility between Christianity and the classical city. At least for the period from Constantine to Justinian, when the traditional civic cults no longer addressed the totality of citizens and the Christian cults did not do so yet, we must reconsider the issue of cult-based citizenship.

In order to provide some structure for this discussion we would propose a series of stages in the evolution of the cities inhabited by Christians. First, as a consequence of the advance of Christianity, there developed a kind of neutral, secularized city whose religious dimension was relegated to the private sphere and whose body of citizens were no longer defined in terms of civic cults. The secular space became the field of competition between different religious groups, as Christian services would be observed on the margins of the public sphere, and have no impact on city life.

Then, with the progressive disappearance of the traditional cults, cities saw the Church take over, adapt, and maintain a number of modes of civic

62 Cf. Salzman (1999); Lançon (2000) 138–139.

63 Cf. Van Uytanghe (1996).

64 J. Chrys., *In martyres Aegyptos*, PG 50, col. 694.

65 Cf. Brown (1980b) 1–22; Bernier (2008).

66 Cf. Andrade (2010).

functioning, developing a more overt Christianity with greater public visibility. Thus Christianity—notwithstanding its universalist claims—made its imprint on the particular local religious practices of a number of cities and consequently adopted certain identifying functions of the former urban cults through the cult of Saints. By these means the religion proved capable of providing each urban community with emblematic figures that distinguished them from other cities and to which the citizens could lay claim. New religious practices came to be developed according to each city's urban character and the personality of its local saints. In this Christianized city, the (mostly Christian) citizens publicly participated in Christian forms of worship but at the same time defined themselves in terms of their membership of the city, and not only by their religious allegiance. A composite civic and Christian culture developed, knitting the community together around common points of reference.⁶⁷ This process has hitherto been largely ignored by modern scholarship.

The 4th century seems to constitute a turning point, witnessing the emergence of Christian institutions liable to represent the totality of the urban community.⁶⁸ Perhaps one could here propose another turning point in Justinian's measures of compulsory conversion, inasmuch as these cancelled the possibility of having non-Christian citizens, for until that point Roman law had defined the body of citizens in non-confessional terms.⁶⁹ Justinian's era certainly saw the emergence of another type of Christian city, corresponding to the ideals of John Chrysostom: a society dominated by Bishops regulating both the charity and the access to the beyond. The culture advocated here by the local authorities was henceforth based on Biblical narrative, at the expense of the classical *paideia*, which disappeared at the same time as the traditional educational structures.

Whether for political, economic or religious reasons, the appearance of the Church in the civic domain modified the nature of the part it took in the consensus, giving rise to a new form of collective, non-civic participation where membership in a community came to be defined in terms of religious life, marked by masses and worship of the Saints. This situation precipitated the end of the civic urban ideal, since the city was henceforth reduced to an administrative and military entity.

In order to assess the extent to which the observance of the new Christian rituals and the progressive disappearance of traditional cults contributed to the evolution sketched here, it will be necessary to specify what is understood

67 Cf. Busine (2014) 220–236.

68 Cf. Sotinel (2005).

69 Cf. Inglebert (2005) 108.

by city, civic identity and citizenship, as Hervé Inglebert proposes in the conclusion to this volume. Allowance must also be made for differences in evolution at different times and places, requiring attention to a multiplicity of sources and analytical approaches. Such is the ambition of this volume, in which historians and archaeologists as well as historians of religion seek to understand whether Ancient Christianity was able to ensure the survival of civic practices and identities and also how much urban realities impacted the evolution of early Christianity.

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Christianisme antique et religion civique en Occident

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La christianisation du monde gréco-romain est un dossier complexe qui a suscité d'innombrables études. Celle-ci propose de s'intéresser à un aspect particulier de la situation religieuse des villes dans l'Antiquité tardive. Dans le monde classique, la religion, on le sait, implique la collectivité civique dans son ensemble ; de là la traditionnelle position qui consiste à affirmer que le politique et le religieux ne peuvent être distingués dans le monde ancien. La religion civique remplit un certain nombre de fonctions, dont celle de mettre en scène la cohésion de la cité. Le christianisme remplit-t-il cette fonction ? Si oui, à partir de quand ? La défense de la cité apparaît comme un lieu privilégié pour entreprendre cette étude. La thèse proposée ici est la suivante : le christianisme tarde à investir les fonctions d'une religion civique. Les attaques contre les villes à l'occasion des campagnes gothiques de la fin du IV^e siècle et du début du V^e révèlent une situation particulière¹.

1 La défense des cités : une affaire civique

Avant le sac de Rome, la défense des cités n'est pas l'affaire du dieu des chrétiens, ou du moins des Églises qui le représentent dans l'Empire romain.

Dans les circonstances militaires graves de la fin du IV^e siècle, alors que les raids barbares menacent de plus souvent directement les villes, les habitants de l'Empire placent très largement leur confiance dans les rites traditionnels, totalement dénués de valeur chrétienne, dont l'accomplissement correct doit être le garant de l'efficacité de la protection divine. Le principe est rappelé tant par les auteurs païens que par leurs contemporains chrétiens.

Ainsi Maxime de Turin, prêchant aux citoyens de Turin soit à l'époque de l'invasion de Radagaise, soit au moment de celle d'Alaric, évoque ainsi les pratiques des habitants de la ville :

¹ J'ai abordé certains aspects de la question dans Sotinel (2013).

Il en est qui, se trouvant dans les tribulations, disent que l'ennemi vaincra par les arts néfastes, et qu'ils doivent donc être vaincus par les mêmes arts, demandant la victoire aux démons, désespérant de Dieu².

De son côté, Zosime rapporte comment Athènes résista à Alaric en 396 grâce à l'apparition sur ses murs d'Athéna Promachos et d'Achille³. On peut bien sûr considérer, comme le fait F. Paschoud, que l'auteur païen du VI^e siècle invente purement et simplement l'épisode. Reste que l'intention est vraisemblable à l'époque⁴ : l'œuvre de Libanios est riche de références au rôle traditionnel des dieux ; pour lui, les entreprises militaires de l'Empire seraient plus heureuses si les 'oracles anciens' ne s'étaient pas tus⁵. Le plus souvent, ses références à la protection divine sont littéraires et renvoient à des événements lointains ou légendaires, mais ils sont parfois actualisés, comme dans le discours composé en 358 pour déplorer le tremblement de terre de Nicomédie, dans lequel il rappelle le lien fort qui unit les dieux tutélaires et la cité qu'ils protègent⁶, ou dans l'hymne à Artémis, qui n'a pas seulement défendu la ville avec Pan contre les Scythes, mais a protégé Libanios lui-même et un de ses élèves des effets d'un tremblement de terre à Antioche⁷.

Lors de la première expédition d'Alaric en Italie, les références à la religion traditionnelle se multiplient. Dans son poème composé en 402, après la défaite des Goths à Pollentia, Claudien fait dire à Alaric qu'il a entendu une voix divine qui lui a enjoint de prendre Rome :

Au surplus, les dieux m'encouragent, non pas par des songes ni par le vol des oiseaux, mais par une voix que j'ai entendue distinctement dans un bois sacré, et qui m'a parlé ainsi : Assez tardé, Alaric ; cette année, franchissant hardiment les Alpes italiques, tu pénétreras jusqu'à la Ville ; là doit s'arrêter ta marche⁸.

2 Max.-Tur, *Homil.* 72, 2. Les homélies 72 et 73, 81-86, qui évoquent toutes un péril militaire, peuvent avoir été prononcées en 393, en 401/402, en 406 ou en 411.

3 Zos. V, 6, 1.

4 Paschoud (1986) 96 n. 10.

5 Libanios, *Oratio* 24, composé en 379 à l'intention de Théodose pour réclamer la vengeance de Julien.

6 Libanios, *Oratio* 61.

7 Libanios, *Oratio* 5, 41 et 46-52.

8 Claud., *De bello get.* 545-550. Traduction Piganiol (1964) 223.

Le même poète rapporte aussi une série de signes tout à fait traditionnels, qui préfigurent l'attaque gothique :

Que prédit le vol des oiseaux ? Qu'annonce aux mortels l'éclair qui brille dans le ciel ? Quel présage tirer des livres sibyllins, dépositaires des destinées de Rome ? De fréquentes éclipses de lune jettent l'épouvante, et souvent, la nuit, les villes pleines de clameurs à la vue de l'astre qui s'obscurcit, retentissent du bruit de l'airain. (...) Et les signes observés l'année précédente, tous les présages que la paix avait fait négliger, ajoutent encore à l'inquiétude que donnent les nouveaux : une grêle de pierres, des essaims d'abeille qui se déplacent, l'incendie qui fait rage de maison en maison, sans cause apparente ; l'apparition d'une comète, signe infailible de malheur...⁹.

Nous savons bien que Claudien est personnellement païen, mais s'il intègre des signes aussi difficiles à christianiser dans ses poèmes officiels, on peut penser que l'empereur très chrétien n'a pas grand-chose à y redire¹⁰.

Parmi les épisodes connus, le plus complexe est sans doute celui rapporté par Zosime et par Sozomène¹¹. En 408, au moment du premier siège de Rome par les Goths, le préfet de la Ville Pompéianus rencontra quelques Étrusques qui promirent d'écarter le péril gothique en célébrant les rites ancestraux. Pompéianus fit alors part de cette proposition au pape Innocent :

(L'évêque de Rome) autorisa les Étrusques à accomplir en secret les rites qu'ils connaissaient. Mais lorsqu'ils déclarèrent que leur célébration ne serait profitable à la ville que si les cérémonies traditionnelles étaient célébrées aux frais de l'État et si le sénat montait au Capitole et accomplissait en cet endroit, ainsi que sur les places de la ville, toutes les solennités qu'il fallait, il n'y en eut pas un seul qui osât participer au culte selon le rite ancestral.¹²

De cet épisode bien connu et maintes fois commenté¹³, il faut souligner ici la dimension rituelle, conforme à la discipline de la religion romaine telle qu'elle existait dans sa dimension officielle avant l'interdiction officielle du paga-

9 Claud., *De bello get.* 227-248. Traduction Piganiol (1964) 213.

10 Claud., *De bello get.* 249-264.

11 Zos. V, 41, 1-4 ; Sozom., *Hist. eccl.* IX, 6, 3-6.

12 Zos. V, 41, 3.

13 Long commentaire et références bibliographiques dans Paschoud (1986) 275-280.

nisme. Sans doute le préfet Pompéianus est-il lui-même personnellement un païen, mais il ne s'agit pas pour lui d'exprimer un choix religieux individuel ; il s'agit d'engager de nouveau la cité dans son entier dans une pratique collective et publique. Est-ce qu'une telle pratique 'heurte les convictions de la majorité de la population'¹⁴ à Rome en 408 ? Je n'en suis pas certaine, si l'évêque de Rome lui-même pouvait trouver le rite en soi tolérable. Mais son caractère public, officiel (avec la participation du Sénat en corps) aurait marqué une rupture totale avec les acquis chrétiens des dernières années. Il ne s'agissait plus seulement de tolérer un pluralisme religieux de fait, comme Symmaque l'avait demandé au moment de l'affaire de l'Autel de la Victoire, ce qu'Innocent semble avoir été prêt à accorder dans ce moment de crise aiguë, mais de reconstituer l'uniformité religieuse, au moins rituelle, de la cité autour de la vieille religion des ancêtres.

2 Le discours des auteurs chrétiens

Or, si les autorités chrétiennes avaient tous les moyens de s'opposer au retour proposé par Pompeianus, elles ne semblent en revanche n'avoir disposé, au début du v^e siècle, d'aucune alternative à proposer aux populations des cités menacées dans leur sécurité par les menaces barbares. Cette timidité paraît incompatible avec le marquage des murailles par des signes chrétiens.

Certes, les chrétiens ont commencé à prier pour les empereurs bien avant leur conversion et, à partir du règne de Constantin, le dieu des chrétiens protège l'empereur dans ses combats ; telle est pour Constantin la signification de sa vision du pont Milvius, qui lui promet de triompher de son adversaire, même si de tels épisodes sont rares, en particulier sous la plume des auteurs chrétiens¹⁵. Nous connaissons aussi des généraux chrétiens qui font appel à la protection de Dieu ou des saints dans leurs entreprises militaires mais il me paraît très significatifs que ces cas soient connus par des auteurs non chrétiens qui les raillent. Ainsi, Ammien évoque à deux reprises le général Sabinianus,

¹⁴ Comme le dit Paschoud (1986) 276.

¹⁵ La dimension impériale de la victoire chrétienne est bien connue et a été longuement débattue ; voir Gagé (1933) 1-34 et Heim (1992). Outre la victoire du Pont Milvius, on peut citer aussi celle de Constance lors de la bataille de Mursa (Sulp. Sev., *Chron.* 11, 38, 5) analysée par F. Heim dans Heim (1991) 73, la guerre de Théodose contre Maxime en 383 (August., *De Civ. Dei* V, 26) et sa victoire contre Eugène (Claud., *Pan. de tertio consulatu Honorii* 96-98, commenté par Wortley (2006) 24. On notera cependant que, même dans ce registre, les références explicites sont rares.

qui, sous le règne de Constance, 'se promène dans les cimetières d'Edesse' au lieu de préparer l'expédition perse¹⁶ ; et Claudien se moque durement du général Jacob qui remplace le combat par les prières et les beuveries :

Puisse ainsi Thomas servir de bouclier pour ta poitrine et Barthélémy t'accompagner à la guerre ; puisse la protection des saints défendre les Alpes contre l'irruption des Barbares ; puisse sainte Suzanne te prêter sa force ; puisse tout ennemi farouche qui franchira le Danube glacé s'y engloutir comme les chevaux rapides de Pharaon ; puisse l'épée vengeresse frapper les hordes gétiques, et la protection de Thècle donner le succès aux troupes romaines ; puisse le convive ivre-mort te procurer un noble triomphe, et les tonneaux verser à flots le vin pour vaincre ta soif ; puisse ta main n'être jamais souillée du sang ennemi.¹⁷

Ces textes témoignent de la réalité d'attitudes qui intègrent étroitement la dimension religieuse chrétienne à la politique militaire. Mais les épisodes mentionnés, dont il faut souligner le petit nombre au IV^e siècle, ont deux caractéristiques qui les éloignent de la question qui nous préoccupe ici, celle de la défense des cités. D'une part, la protection divine est dans tous les cas personnelle : Dieu protège le croyant qui se confie à lui et récompense sa piété, mais il n'a pas une fonction permanente de défenseur. D'autre part, ces interventions religieuses n'ont aucun enracinement géographique particulier ; elles ne concernent ni un lieu, ni une collectivité. Les prières chrétiennes n'ont pas le caractère fonctionnel des rites traditionnels, et elles ne semblent pas s'attacher à la communauté politique que représente la cité. Entre le salut de l'âme des croyants et celui de l'Empire dans son entier, le christianisme laisse ainsi en jachère le champ de la religion civique.

Les auteurs chrétiens eux-mêmes ne s'empressent pas de développer – sinon sur un plan très général – le thème de l'efficacité militaire de la puissance divine. C'est déjà vrai à l'échelle de l'Empire tout entier, mais ce l'est encore plus lorsqu'il s'agit de la cité.

On voit bien, dans la littérature de la fin du IV^e siècle, se dessiner l'image du martyr intercesseur, mais elle n'est nette que lorsqu'il s'agit d'interventions individuelles, en particulier de guérisons. Sinon, les discours restent très vagues et, surtout, centrés sur les questions strictement religieuses. Ainsi, Basile de Césarée dit que, grâce à la présence de leurs reliques, à propos des quarante martyrs de Sébaste à Césarée :

16 Amm. Marc. 18, 7, 7 et 19, 3.

17 Claud., *Epigr.* 25.

Les voici qui occupent notre contrée et, semblables à des tours puissantes, nous défendent contre les attaques des ennemis¹⁸

mais l'ensemble de l'homélie qu'il prononce à cette occasion souligne surtout la dimension spirituelle et morale de l'aide apportée par les martyrs, au demeurant des soldats qui ont refusé de servir pour rester fidèle à leur foi, préférant la fidélité 'au Souverain du monde' à 'la fidélité à un prince mortel'. Grégoire de Nysse prononçant le panégyrique du martyr Théodore lui attribue bien, de manière rétrospective, l'arrêt de l'attaque gothique, d'une manière toute immatérielle, mais il insiste beaucoup plus sur l'efficacité du saint pour lutter contre les divisions de l'Église¹⁹. Jean Chrysostome, prononçant une homélie sur les martyrs d'Égypte, insiste de la même façon :

Les corps des saints sont une plus forte protection de notre cité que n'importe quelle fortification inexpugnable. Comme autant de hautes tours places autour d'elle, ils repoussent les assauts, non seulement des ennemis qui peuvent être vus et entendus, mais aussi les attaques des démons invisibles, repoussant toutes les machinations du démon²⁰.

De la même façon, lorsque saint Ambroise invente les reliques de Gervais et Protas, s'il utilise la figure du combattant, c'est pour la transcrire sur le plan de la foi :

Que tous sachent quels combattants je recherche, qui puissent protéger, qui n'ont pas l'habitude d'attaquer. J'en ai acquis de tels pour toi, peuple saint, pour qu'ils soient utiles à tout le monde, qu'ils ne nuisent à personne. Ce sont de tels défenseurs que je sollicite, de tels soldats que j'ai : ils ne sont pas soldats du siècle, mais soldats du Christ²¹.

Comme le dit fort justement A. M. Orselli, « il n'est pas possible de voir dans (la lettre 22, §10-12) davantage que les premiers signes d'une tendance à considérer les collectivités civiles en tant que telles comme objet de la protection des martyrs » car Ambroise parle de la *plebs sancta*, ou de l'*Ecclesia*, quand il désigne la collectivité protégée par les reliques²².

18 Bas., *Hom. in quadraginta martyres* 8, PG 31, col. 521.

19 Greg. Nyss., *Oratio laudatoria sancti martyris Theodori*, PG 46, col. 735-747.

20 J. Chrys., *In martyres Aegyptos*, PG 50, col. 693, cité par Wortley (2006) 24.

21 Amb., *Ep.* 21, PL 16, col. 1022.

22 Orselli (1985) 72.

Lorsque Victrice de Rouen accueille les reliques apportées pour son Église par son ami Aelianus, en 396 ou 397, il s'étend longuement sur les vertus des martyrs. Certes, il évoque la vocation des saints à 'protéger ceux qui s'opposent aux ennemis' mais, si une telle protection inclut implicitement aussi l'assistance dans des combats, son objet principal reste moral et spirituel :

Cependant, la gloire de vos pouvoirs s'accroîtra si vous défendez ceux qui peinent et si vous protégez ceux qui s'opposent à l'ennemi. Que prennent les armes ceux qui le veulent : Nous, ce sont vos rangs, ce sont vos enseignes qui nous gardent. Il n'y a pas d'ennemi pour nous si vous nous accordez le pardon. Les liens qui nous rattachent à la vie sont entre vos mains. Remettez nos fautes et aucune attaque ne nous troublera²³.

Outre qu'on relèvera que ce passage sur les fonctions défensives des reliques n'occupe que quelques lignes sur un discours de plus de vingt pages, on note aussi que l'enseignement de Victrice porte plus sur le détachement que sur le salut physique garanti par les saints. Le véritable don des saints est la réconciliation avec Dieu, le salut éternel, à côté desquels le sort des armes est de peu d'importance. On trouve la même sensibilité dans le premier poème composé par Paulin de Nole en l'honneur de Félix au moment où les Goths menacent la sécurité de l'Italie. Avant d'associer Félix à la défense du territoire menacé, Paulin insiste sur le contraste entre la tristesse de temps menaçant et la joie que doit inspirer la fête du saint :

Que s'éloignent donc les tristes craintes, et que retourne la joie dans les cœurs soulagés. Il est juste que tout motif de tristesse s'enfuie en ce saint jour, que la gloire d'un si grand confesseur le fasse resplendir, lumineux entre tous les jours de l'année, et l'orne par l'afflux d'un grand concours de peuple. Moi, si je devais malheureusement vivre soumis aux armes des Goths, entre les féroces Alains, je célébrerais avec joie, et si de multiples chaînes pesaient sur mon cou, l'ennemi ne pourrait pas lier mon esprit dans mes membres prisonniers, la piété, d'une âme libre, piétinerait le triste esclavage²⁴.

23 Victricius Rotomag., *De laude sanctorum* vi.

24 Paulin. Nol., *Carm.* 26, 19-27.

On retrouve ainsi le même enseignement de détachement, porté ici à l'extrême et qui valut à Paulin d'être considéré comme un 'mauvais citoyen'²⁵. Plus loin, Paulin semble conseiller la confiance en Dieu comme alternative à toute action militaire :

Pour l'instant, le flot sonore des combats approche ; détourne-le de notre pays ; que le bras impie des guerriers s'écarte de ce sol sacré, qui a pour retranchement ta Grâce ; que l'ennemi craigne ton église comme les démons la craignent ; que le sang ne la souille pas²⁶.

Qu'ils se confient dans les légions, qu'ils se fassent des murailles un refuge en réparant les fortifications, ceux qui n'ont pas confiance dans le Christ sauveur. Pour nous, le signe et la profession de la croix invincible nous protège ; armés de Dieu dans notre esprit, nous n'avons pas besoin des armes du corps ; et bien que nos membres paraissent inertes, nous utilisons les mêmes armes que, dans le temps d'une paix sereine, nous portons contre des ennemis invisibles²⁷.

Bien sûr, Paulin ne s'adresse ni à des soldats, ni aux autorités politiques de la cité ou de la province, mais à des moines qui ont renoncé au monde et à la population variée, et souvent modeste, des pèlerins. C'est peut-être à l'intention de cette partie de l'auditoire que Paulin infléchit son discours d'une manière plus immédiatement réconfortante. Dans la suite du poème, il évoque tour à tour tous les épisodes bibliques dans lesquels l'intervention miraculeuse de Dieu a procuré la victoire lorsque le peuple juif était pourtant le plus faible, et finit par solliciter Félix d'accorder à son peuple, celui des chrétiens de Nole, d'obtenir du seigneur le salut de l'Empire :

Pour nous aussi que la grâce de Félix par un souffle bienveillant, avec l'inspiration de Dieu, tempère les feux des guerres, et étouffant les incendies surgis sur les terres romuléennes, rafraîchisse par une paix sereine les chaleurs brûlantes, éteigne les préoccupations et libère les cœurs du souci²⁸.

25 Heim (1992) 293, évoquant C. Julian qui considérait en 1926 que « cet excès de foi chrétienne ressemblait singulièrement à un acte de désertion ».

26 Paulin. Nol., *Carm.* 26, 255.

27 *Ibid.* 103-110.

28 *Ibid.* 271-275.

La péroration du poème est un vibrant et confiant appel à l'aide efficace du saint :

Libère-nous aujourd'hui avec une aide semblable, ô Félix, des périls et des malheurs qui s'approchent de nos maisons, et que la colère terrible et son fléau sanglant soient repoussés au loin. Détourne de nos régions les combats qui approchent en un flot sonore ; que les mains impies s'éloignent des limites dont ta grâce est le rempart (*uallum*). Et que les ennemis craignent ton sanctuaire comme les démons afin que le sang répandu ne viole pas ces lieux que l'eau et le feu ont épargné²⁹.

Il ne faut pas cependant se tromper sur la valeur de la demande de Paulin. Lorsqu'il dit être prêt à vivre la captivité dans la joie, ou lorsqu'il implore le soutien céleste contre les Goths, l'évêque de Nole ne donne pas des conseils stratégiques : comme tout bon prédicateur chrétien, il puise dans la situation contemporaine des leçons pour l'édification morale et spirituelle de ses ouailles. D'ailleurs, l'ensemble de son discours ne s'adresse pas à la cité de Nole dans son entier, mais à la communauté de ses fidèles, grossie des pèlerins venus visiter le tombeau de Félix en ce jour de fête, et augmentée des lecteurs raffinés de ses œuvres. Si les terres romaines sont poétiquement évoquées, c'est le sanctuaire même de Félix qui doit être épargné. Son poème opère une sorte de conversion : du détachement enseigné dans les premiers vers, en passant par le mépris des armes, l'évêque et poète en appelle à une protection efficace et territoriale de la part du saint. Cependant, manque entièrement la dimension civique de cette fonction. Paulin parle soit de l'empire romain (le *regnum romanum*), sans en préciser les limites qui se confondent avec celles de la civilisation, soit du sanctuaire de Félix et de la communauté chrétienne locale.

À l'époque où Paulin compose son poème, l'évêque Chromace, dans une cité autrement plus directement menacée par les incursions gothiques que la Campanie, conserve encore une attitude de détachement. La seule information que nous possédons sur son attitude pendant la crise militaire provient de Rufin, à qui il demande de traduire l'*Histoire ecclésiastique* d'Eusèbe de Césarée afin de consoler et reconforter les chrétiens de son Église en cette période troublée³⁰. Comme Paulin, il ne s'adresse qu'à la communauté des chrétiens, et non à la cité tout entière, et ne propose aucune protection effective contre la menace qui pèse ville.

29 *Ibid.*, 421-424.

30 Rufin., *Hist. eccl.*, Préface.

Il est intéressant de noter la différence entre le poème composé par Paulin en 402, et celui de la fête de Félix de 407, juste après la victoire de Stilicon sur Radagaise. Là où le poème de 402 commençait par un éloge du détachement et de l'indifférence au sort des armes, celui de 407 commence par une action de grâce à Félix :

Parce que lui-même, patron de la paix, avec ses pères Paul et Pierre, et avec ses doux frères les martyrs, a supplié le roi des rois pour qu'il accorde d'une puissance (*numen*) favorable le temps de l'empire romain, qu'il repousse les Gètes qui se pressaient déjà aux portes de la Ville, qu'il pour qu'il impose la mort, ou plutôt les chaînes à ceux-mêmes qui menaçaient de ruine l'empire romain³¹.

En revanche, une fois affirmé le caractère surnaturel et chrétien de la victoire romaine – victoire impériale, remportée loin de Nole –, Paulin se tourne vers ses préoccupations habituelles : le cercle de ses amis de l'aristocratie romaine chrétienne, les travaux qu'il a entrepris à Nole, son itinéraire spirituel, et les vertus martyriales de Félix.

3 Le cas particulier de Rome

Contre cette position, on a avancé l'idée d'une christianisation globale de la ville de Rome dès le début du v^e siècle. L'argument, développé par Hendrick W. Dey dans un livre récent, repose en partie sur l'interprétation donnée aux croix que l'on peut encore observer sur les linteaux de certaines portes de la muraille aurélienne³². Il s'agit d'un dossier complexe qui ne peut être épuisé ici, mais qui mérite d'être présenté. Les portes Pinciana et Appia portent des croix tant sur la façade interne des portes que sur celle qui regarde vers l'extérieur ; la clé de voûte interne de la porta Latina et la clé de voûte externe de la porta Asinaria sont ornées de croix gravées. Parmi les autres portes de Rome, cinq n'ont pas été assez bien conservées pour fournir d'indication sur le décor qu'elles pouvaient porter dans l'antiquité, trois au moins portent une inscription honorifique qui commémore la dédicace des murailles et une est assurément restée anépigraphe. Sur la base de considérations formelles, Ian Richmond, auteur

31 Paulin. Nol., *Carm.* 21, 6-12.

32 Dey (2011) 137-159, dans deux développements éloquentement intitulés : 'Honorian Rome and Celestial Jerusalem' et '*Sedes Petri* ; *caput mundi* ? Rivals of Rome and the imitation of the Aurelian Wall'.

d'un ouvrage encore fondamental sur la muraille de Rome³³, rejeta la datation jusqu'alors admise, qui renvoyait ces signes à des restaurations du VI^e siècle, pour proposer une double démonstration : les croix ont toutes été inscrites au même moment, et ce moment est celui d'une restauration globale des murailles, dans son analyse le règne de Maxence³⁴. Cette opinion a longtemps été unanimement suivie, tout en déplaçant le moment envisagé du règne de Maxence à celui d'Honorius³⁵ ; récemment H. W. Dey a proposé de distinguer la croix qui orne la clé de voûte de la Porta Appia – qui est associée à des invocations en grec aux saints Georges et Conon – pour laquelle il revient à une datation au milieu du VI^e siècle, des autres, pour lesquelles il conserve une datation contemporaine des travaux de réfection d'Honorius³⁶. Par ailleurs, à certains emplacements des murailles, des jeux de briques forment des dessins, dont certains sont des croix dont il est difficile, au début du V^e siècle, de ne pas accepter le caractère chrétien³⁷. Lucos Cozza le premier a proposé de voir dans tous ces 'caprici' des signes d'une valeur apotropaïque, fortement marqués religieusement ; il propose de les interpréter tous (et non seulement les croix) en termes de messages religieux : ainsi, les palmes font référence aux martyrs, les figures rayonnantes deviennent des « signes de lumière »³⁸. Un argument technique important avancé par Richmond et Cozza est l'impossibilité de dissocier la construction des portes du décor chrétien parce que les croix sont inscrites sur les clés de voûte. En fait, l'argument n'est pas valable pour les portes Latina, Appia et Ostiensis, où les croix sont gravées ; certes, il a fallu que des échafaudages soient montés pour accéder à la hauteur des linteaux des portes, mais ceci est envisageable à différents moments : après le tremblement de terre de 423, après celui de 502, ou au moment des travaux de Bélisaire³⁹. Le cas est différent pour la porta Pinciana, où la croix latine à bouts pattés à l'intérieur de

33 Richmond (1930).

34 Richmond (1930) 251-262.

35 Cozza (1987) a adopté le point de vue de Richmond, en insistant sur l'impossibilité de dissocier techniquement parlant la réfection des portes et les inscriptions. Comme on le verra plus bas, il associe aussi les croix sur les portes à des motifs dessinés par l'agencement des briques dans certaines portions du mur. Cardilli, Coarelli, Pisani Sartorio (1995) ne mentionnent la question qu'en passant. Coates Stephens (1998) n'y fait pas allusion. La même position fait l'objet d'une note de bas de page dans Mancini (2001) 29.

36 Dey (2011) 295-297.

37 On notera incidemment que, dans l'hypothèse de Richmond de travaux réalisés sous Maxence, la question se pose de manière très différente, un peu comme elle se pose pour les croix observables sur certaines de ses monnaies.

38 Cozza (1987) 26 ; Dey (2011) 149-150 reprend l'hypothèse.

39 Dey (2011) 292-297.

la ville et celle, assez similaire, à l'extérieur, sont en ronde bosse, ce qui semble exclure toute intervention postérieure à l'ouverture de la porte.

Si l'autorité politique qui préside à l'érection des murailles de la cité marque les portes d'un signe de croix, cela signifie que la ville est collectivement placée sous la protection du dieu des chrétiens. Si cette date est bien 402/403, Rome se distingue de façon marquée de ce que l'on observe ailleurs en Occident à la même époque. Or, il me semble qu'une série d'arguments autorisent à contester cette datation et à critiquer l'idée d'une christianisation institutionnelle de la cité de Rome.

Le point de départ de l'analyse du dossier doit être l'inscription honorifique qui, elle est précisément datée et assurément contemporaine de la restauration des murailles par Honorius. Il s'agit de l'inscription de dédicace, encore conservée (avec effacement du nom de Stilicon) et qui était répétée au moins sur trois portes :

Le Sénat et le Peuple romain, aux empereurs Césars nos deux Seigneurs invaincus, victorieux et triomphateurs, les princes Arcadius et Honorius toujours Auguste pour avoir instauré les murs, les portes et les tours pour la ville éternelle, d'immenses décombres ayant été dégagés, sur la suggestion du *uir clarissimus et inlustris* le comte et maître des deux milices Stilicon (le sénat et le peuple romain) a élevé pour la perpétuité de leur nom des statues, Flavius Macrobius Longinianus, *uir clarissimus*, préfet de la Ville, dévoué aux génies de leurs majestés.⁴⁰

Le caractère conservateur du texte de l'inscription est frappant. Les épigraphistes familiers des inscriptions impériales tardives ne sont pas surpris par l'absence de toute référence au christianisme de l'empereur, des officiels ou de la ville de Rome, bien conforme aux pratiques du IV^e siècle ; ici, chaque mot évoque des traditions exclusivement politiques de l'Antiquité tardive, dans des termes qui sont sans doute ou bien rares, ou bien presque désuets en 401/402 : Rome est désignée comme *Vrbs aeterna* formule fréquente jusqu'au IV^e siècle,

40 CIL VI 1188, 1189, 1190 : *S(enatus) P(opulus)q(ue) R(omanus) | Imp(eratoribus) Caes(aribus) D(ominis) n(ostris duobus) inuictissimis principibus Arcadio et Honorio uictoribus ac triumphatoribus semper aug(ustis) | ob instauratos urbi aeternae muros, portas ac turres, egestis immensis ruderibus, ex suggestione u(iri) c(larissimi) et inlustris | comitis et magistri utriusq(ue) militiae Stilichonis, ad perpetuitatem nominis eorum simulacra constituit | curante Fl(avio) Macrobio Longiniano u(iro) c(larissimo) praef(ecto) urbis, d(euoto) n(uminibus) m(aiestatribus)q(ue) eorum.*

rare par la suite⁴¹ ; l'expression *devotus Numini maiestatis*, apparaît au début du III^e siècle et est ensuite utilisée de manière constante durant tout le IV^e siècle, mais son attestation la plus tardive date de 418/420, à Rome⁴² ; *simulacra* est le mot classique pour désigner les statues, mais apparaît comme un archaïsme au V^e siècle. La référence à la pérennité du nom de l'empereur se retrouve aussi dans des inscriptions du IV^e siècle associées aux constructions publiques (dédicace du pont de Valentinien par Symmaque⁴³, inscription sans doute pertinente à un arc urbain à proximité du pont St Pierre⁴⁴). Dans l'ensemble, la rhétorique de cette dédicace n'a d'exceptionnel que la rigueur de son conservatisme. Elle s'inscrit solidement dans une tradition d'expression du pouvoir impérial qui est marquée à la fois par l'attachement aux valeurs traditionnels de la politique civique et par l'absence de référence religieuse explicite⁴⁵, formant ainsi un langage commun aux citoyens de l'Empire, quelque fût leur affiliation religieuse. À ce titre, les inscriptions placent fermement la restauration des murailles de Rome dans le contexte de la cité classique. La question est à la fois de savoir si l'idéologie politique qui transparaît dans cette inscription est compatible avec les croix qui ornent certaines portes et de comprendre s'il est possible que la même autorité ait décidé à la fois les unes et les autres.

Justement, l'inscription, dédiée par le Sénat et le Peuple romain, précise quelles sont les autorités engagées dans la restauration de la muraille, mettant ainsi en scène les acteurs du pouvoir politique à Rome au tout début du V^e siècle : Arcadius et Honorius, les empereurs, Stilicon, le maître des milices, régent d'Honorius et aspirant régent d'Arcadius, le préfet de la Ville Fl. Macrobius Longinianus⁴⁶ ; ni Stilicon ni Longinianus ne sont des représentants

41 Utilisée par exemple dans *CIL VI 1154* : [propter aeter]nae urbis sua[e in futur]um domination(em) [capitum b]onorumque [exemplo pa]tris Fl. Val. [Constantini pii fe]licis inuict(i) semper Au[g(usti) d(euot) n(umini) m(aiestati)q(ue) eo]rum selon la restitution de Mommsen.

42 Gunde (1953). Les inscriptions les plus tardives sont *CIL VI 1193* et *CIL VI 1703*.

43 *CIL VI, 31402 = ILS 769*. Voir Lizzi Testa (2004) 447. L'inscription est gravée sur un piédestal de marbre sur qui est sans doute la base de la colonne monumentale d'entrée du pont, du côté du champ de Mars.

44 *CIL VI 1184*, inscription connue seulement par la sylloge d'Einsiedeln, qui se trouvait sur un arc à proximité du pont saint Pierre : *imperatores caesares ddd nnn Gratianus Valentinianus et Theodosius pii felices semper auggg arcum ad concludendum opus omnium porticum maximarum aeterni nominis suis pecunia propria fieri ornarique iusserunt*.

45 Voir à ce sujet Lepelley (1992) ; Lepelley (1993).

46 Sa carrière est bien connue : *PLRE 2*, p. 686-687, mais son identification soulève quelques difficultés qui ne sont pas étrangères à ce dossier : correspondant de Symmaque, il est surtout proche de Stilicon ; en fonction à la cour depuis 398 au moins (Symm., *Ep.* 95,

de l'aristocratie 'païenne', mais ceux d'un pouvoir impérial profondément christianisé. Pourtant, en composant leur texte, les auteurs de la dédicace (le Sénat et le peuple romain) choisissent de ne pas modifier le langage traditionnel de l'identité civique de la ville ; et dans ce langage, le christianisme n'a pas de place en 401-402.

Il y a donc une discordance idéologique entre les croix et l'inscription officielle. Il y a aussi une différence frappante entre la qualité de réalisation des unes et de l'autre. Les inscriptions sont monumentales – et elles devaient être encore plus impressionnantes lorsqu'elles étaient associées aux statues des empereurs aujourd'hui disparues –, rigoureusement normées et répétées à l'identique. Les autorités qui les ont produites sont explicitement nommées. Les croix sont modestes par leur taille, très différente de l'une à l'autre, adressant un message largement implicite (à moins qu'elles n'aient été accompagnées d'inscriptions peintes), ne disant rien des auteurs de la prise de décision. Ces différences visuelles et matérielles font d'emblée soupçonner qu'elles ne sont pas le fruit de la même décision politique. Si, en effet, l'inscription de la croix sur les murs était, comme le suppose H. Dey, une manière d'affirmer que les défenses urbaines devaient être dorénavant intrinsèquement chrétiennes⁴⁷, la manifestation d'une telle innovation serait étonnamment timide et inorganisée. La comparaison entre les entrées 'impériales' et les entrées 'chrétiennes' serait tout à fait au désavantage de ces dernières, ce qui élimine de toutes façons l'hypothèse selon laquelle la réfection des murs de Rome a été décidée

p. 94 avec note afférente), il devient comte des Largesses Sacrées au plus tard à la fin de 399 (Cod. Theod. VI, 30, 17, voir Delmaire (1992) 154-157), et s'oppose à Nicomache Flavien, alors préfet de la Ville (Symm., *Ep.* VII, 96 et 100). Après que la fonction de *PVR* a été brièvement assurée par Protadius (*PLRE* I, p. 751-752 ; Chastagnol (1962) 243), il devient préfet de la Ville après 400. Pendant sa préfecture, il concourt à la construction du baptistère de l'église Sainte-Anastasie : *ICVR* II, p. 150, n°19 = Diehl 92. Voir aussi Niquet (2000) 184. La fidélité de Longinianus à Stilicon est constante : préfet du prétoire d'Italie à partir de janvier 460 (Cod. Theod. XIII, 7, 2), il meurt à Pavie au moment du massacre des partisans de Stilicon : Zos. V 32, 7. Cependant, son nom n'est pas effacé des inscriptions romaines, contrairement à celui de Stilicon. Il faut résolument écarter l'identification de Longinianus au romain homonyme féru de philosophie néoplatonicienne qui échange avec Augustin des lettres non datées : August., *Ep.* 233-235, *CSEL* 57, 517-523. Chastagnol (1962) 255 accepte l'identification. Callu (2009) 93, dans son édition de Symmaque, est plus prudent. Matthews (1990) 367 envisage que la dédicace du baptistère a pu être accomplie dans le cadre des fonctions officielles de Longinianus, sans avoir aucune signification sur son adhésion religieuse personnelle. Rüpke, Glock, Richardson (2008) n° 1697, acceptent l'identification, qui est rejetée par Cameron (2011) 189-190, 376.

47 Dey (2011) 53 n. 30.

avec la volonté d'assimiler la Ville à la Jérusalem céleste en créant une muraille 'christianisée'⁴⁸. Qu'est-ce qui empêchait d'associer dans une même inscription le nom des empereurs et une référence au christianisme, comme le fera bientôt Théodose II sur les murs de Constantinople ? Sans doute le désir de ne pas heurter une population romaine encore très hétérogène sur le plan religieux et, plus encore, la sensibilité d'une bonne partie du Sénat, dont l'appui devenait de plus en plus indispensable à un pouvoir impérial occidental peu sûr du soutien de Constantinople. Mais dans ce cas, pourquoi ruiner l'effet politiquement consensuel des inscriptions honorifiques par des croix qui ne pouvaient (et ne devaient) passer inaperçues ? Rien ne peut empêcher de voir dans les deux séries de signes deux discours contradictoires sur la défense de la Ville. Pour cette raison, je réfute l'hypothèse de la réalisation simultanée des deux décors de portes de ville⁴⁹.

Reste en effet à poser une dernière question : à quelle date peut-on envisager l'inscription de croix sur les portes de Rome ? Il faudrait poursuivre cette étude au-delà du sac de Rome de 410 pour voir de quelle façon les autorités chrétiennes acceptent progressivement de prendre en charge la dimension religieuse de la défense des cités dans leur pastorale et dans leur discours. Plus que la question technique – il faut en effet, comme l'a déjà dit L. Cozza, que des échafaudages soient érigés pour permettre de travailler les clés de voûte ; mais de telles occasions se sont présentées à maintes reprises après 410⁵⁰. Il est sans doute plus intéressant de considérer les situations politiques qui pourraient être propices à l'inscription des croix : dans la mesure où les elles ne sont ni systématiques, ni identiques, elles ne signifient pas seulement que le pouvoir est entièrement acquis au christianisme, mais aussi qu'il est moins sensible aux rites public et à l'affirmation d'une idéologie civique forte qu'en 401/402.

48 Dey (2011) 148-150.

49 Reste la question de la porta Pinciana. Deux pistes peuvent être suivies pour intégrer la question technique (les croix sur la porta Pinciana sont sculptées et ne peuvent avoir été réalisées après la construction de la porte) et l'analyse que je propose ici : la porta Pinciana était-elle terminée avant le sac de Rome ? Les restaurations réalisées en 2012 pourraient fournir des éléments de datation nouveaux ? La porte a des caractéristiques spécifiques qui étaient déjà notées par Richmond. La porta Pinciana se trouve à la limite de la *domus* du même nom, qui appartenait à Anicia Faltonia Proba, et qui passe par la suite au domaine impérial. On sait par Procope que la rumeur romaine accusait Proba d'avoir ouvert la porte aux Goths. Est-il envisageable que la famille ait eu un rôle particulier non seulement dans l'entretien des murailles, mais aussi dans la construction de la porte ? Si c'est le cas, l'inscription d'une croix surprend moins chez cette famille très engagée dans le christianisme romain. Voir Jolivet, Sotinel (2012).

50 Voir supra n. 39.

Une période de pouvoir politique faible, susceptible de laisser le champ à des initiatives non coordonnées de groupes de travailleurs, ce qui pourrait convenir à la fin du v^e siècle ? ou un pouvoir politique bienveillant et soucieux du bon état de la cité, mais passablement indifférent à la forme des expressions religieuses, comme celui du roi Théodoric, dont on sait qu'il est intervenu pour la restauration des murailles⁵¹ ? Plus tard encore, à l'initiative de Bélisaire ou de Narsès ou de leurs hommes, comme c'est très certainement le cas pour l'inscription grecque ? Dans tous les cas de figure, même si les croix ne figurent pas sur toutes les portes, elles marquent la cité d'une identité chrétienne globale.

Nous savons que les murailles de Rome sont effectivement devenues chrétiennes au vi^e siècle. Dès le début du vi^e siècle, l'usage est de donner des noms chrétiens à certaines : avant 536, la porte Aurélienne et appelée San Pancrazio, « le nom d'un saint homme », nous dit Procope⁵². Il est possible que ce nom ait été adopté lorsque le pape Symmaque, en 505, a remplacé l'ancienne basilique funéraire par une nouvelle dotée de bains pour le clergé⁵³. Le rôle du pape Symmaque dans la christianisation des murs pourrait être assez décisif si on accepte l'authenticité de l'inscription de la sylloge de Cambridge qui attribue à ce pontife une inscription peinte sur « la porte urbaine de St-Pierre », si celle-ci n'est pas la porte Léonine, mais la porta Cornelia, dont Procope nous dit qu'elle est à son époque nommée d'après Pierre, le chef des apôtres du Christ, puisqu'il repose non loin de là⁵⁴. Une fresque disparue était accompagnée d'un poème sur deux colonnes se terminant par

*Antistes portam renouauit Simmacus istam / Vt rome per eum nichil esset
non renouatum*⁵⁵

L'appropriation par l'évêque de Rome de cette porte particulière pourrait être mise en relation avec une information curieuse transmise par Procope : alors que Bélisaire se propose de renforcer la portion du mur entre la porta Flaminia et la porta Pinciana, aujourd'hui Muro Torto, qui menaçait ruine, les habitants

51 *Anon. Vales.* 67, *MGH Chron.* 1, 324, 67 ; *Cassiodorus, Chron.* 39, *MGH Chron.*, II, 160 ; *Cassiodorus, Var.* 1, 25, 2 ; *Cassiodorus, Var.* 2, 34.

52 *Procop., De bell.* V, 18.

53 *Liber Pont.*, v. *Symmachi*, p. 262.

54 *Procop., De bell.* V, 19, 2-4. Duchesne (1910) considère que l'auteur de la sylloge parle de la porta San Pietro de la muraille léonine, ce qui est une raison parmi d'autres de sa conviction résolue sur l'inauthenticité des inscriptions de la sylloge, mais Silvagni (1943) l'a défendue avec de bons arguments ; il vaudrait la peine de reprendre ce dossier.

55 Silvagni (1943) 97.

l'en dissuadèrent en lui disant que l'apôtre Pierre avait promis qu'il prendrait soin de la garde des murs à cet emplacement⁵⁶.

Il faudra reprendre avec plus de précision l'étude des étapes de l'évolution qui conduit d'une conception impériale traditionnelle de la défense de la ville à une conception chrétienne. Dans cette évolution, la prise de Rome en 410 a sans doute joué un rôle crucial. Nous connaissons bien le débat passionné entre chrétiens et païens à propos de la responsabilité de la nouvelle religion dans le désastre, et nous savons bien que *La Cité de Dieu* n'a pas été la seule réponse proposée par les chrétiens pour répondre à des critiques, dont la moindre n'était pas l'inefficacité du christianisme à protéger Rome. C'était un reproche efficace, surtout si l'on pense à Rome comme à une ville et pas seulement comme au symbole de l'Empire. De fait, le christianisme n'était pas, au début du v^e siècle, une religion civique. Il avait évolué d'une religion personnelle et communautaire vers une religion impériale, mais les chrétiens n'avaient pas réussi, ou pas souhaité, le substituer à la religion civique : pas de procession urbaine, pas de célébration rassemblant l'ensemble de la population, pas de prière pour la cité et... pas de croix sur les murs. En occident au moins, le développement du christianisme avait creusé un vide religieux dans les villes. Si Innocent refuse aux prêtres étrusques d'accomplir les rites publiquement, il ne formule aucune contre-proposition chrétienne⁵⁷. Je pense qu'une des réponses des autorités chrétiennes à la crise de 410 fut justement d'accepter de remplir ce rôle de religion civique, et je considère que l'inscription de croix sur les portes de la Ville est un élément de cette réponse, de même que la célébration de messes commémoratives de la fin du sac par le pape Léon au milieu du siècle. Si on accepte cette conclusion, on peut envisager l'évolution religieuse de l'Antiquité tardive sous une lumière nouvelle : à côté de la christianisation de l'Empire (de l'empereur lui-même et des institutions impériales) dont nous connaissons assez bien les étapes, s'est produit un processus beaucoup plus lent et irrégulier de christianisation des cités de l'Empire. Une telle perspective pourrait être utile à une meilleure compréhension des évolutions du christianisme de l'Antiquité : le christianisme a été au moins autant

56 Procop., *De bell.* V, 23, 5. L'association St-Pierre-Porta Flaminia-Porta Pinciana pourrait être liée à l'acquisition par l'empereur de la *Domus Pinciana* et à la construction par Honorius ou Valentinien III d'une résidence dans les jardins ; voir à ce sujet Jolivet, Sotinell (2002) n. 47.

57 En revanche, dans Paris menacée par Attila, Geneviève est en situation de proposer aux habitants désarmés un rite collectif urbain qui s'inscrit parfaitement dans la logique d'une religion civique.

transformé par sa fonction nouvelle de religion civique que, un siècle plutôt, par la protection de Constantin.

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Les lieux du polythéisme dans l'espace urbain et le paysage mémoriel d'Antioche-sur-l'Oronte, de Libanios à Malalas (IV^e-VI^e s.)

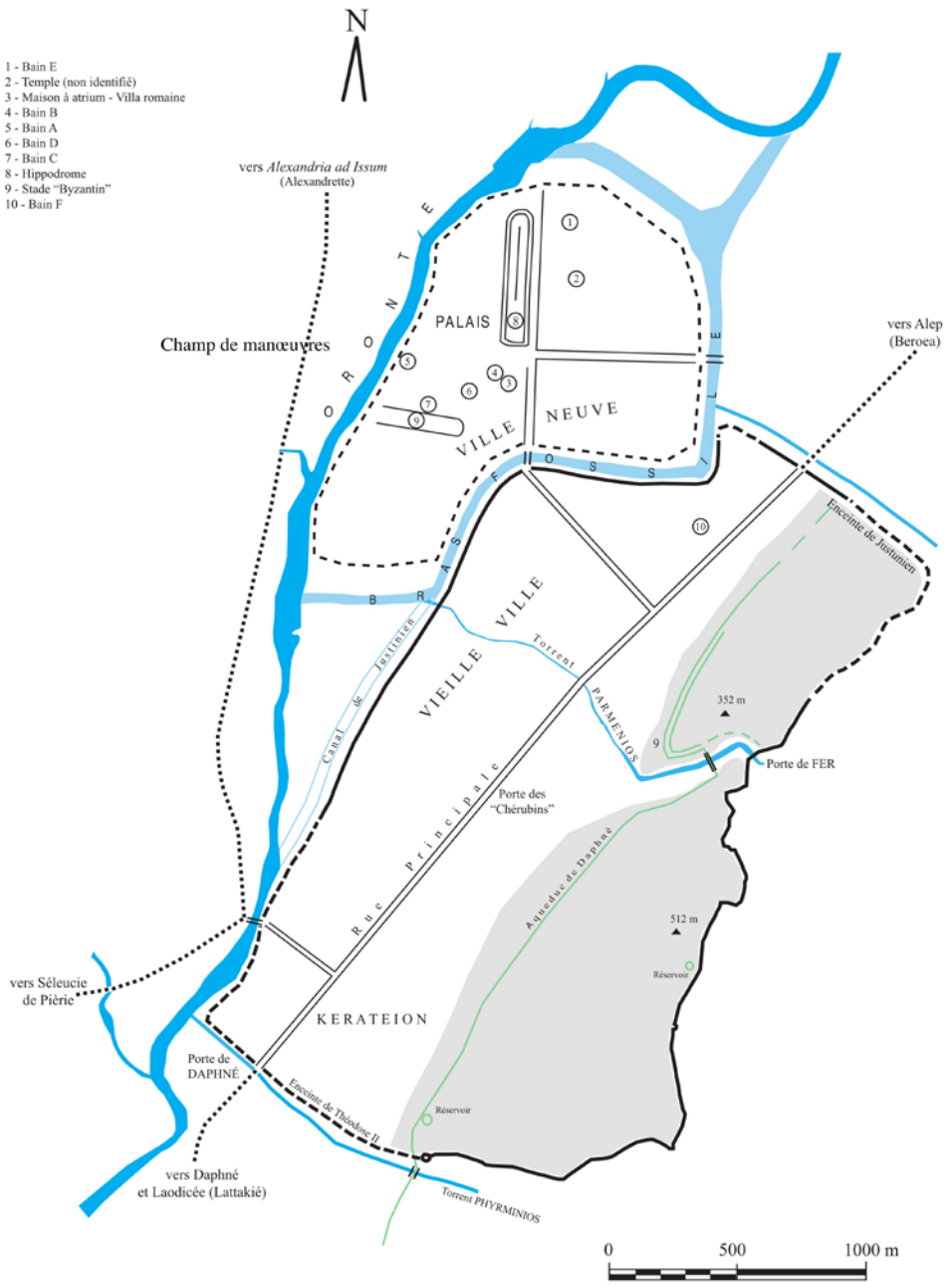
Catherine Saliou

L'espace urbain est un lieu d'activités et de manifestations de tous ordres et, dans les relations entre groupes religieux, un enjeu de rivalité pour la visibilité, l'accessibilité, la publicité. La ville elle-même est à la fois une réalité concrète et, dans l'esprit de chacun, un univers mental, chargé de souvenirs, d'affects, de connaissances vraies ou fausses. Cet ensemble de représentations constitue ce que l'on appellera ici un « paysage mémoriel ». Il est à la fois individuel et collectif et n'est saisissable qu'à travers des énoncés singuliers élaborés à partir d'un patrimoine partagé que ces énoncés eux-mêmes contribuent à enrichir et à mettre en forme. Le devenir des temples dans l'Antiquité tardive a fait l'objet de nombreux travaux récents, concernant le plus souvent les édifices envisagés isolément¹. La présente contribution est consacrée à une ville que l'on s'efforcera de saisir dans son ensemble et aussi bien dans sa réalité concrète que dans ses dimensions imaginaires. Il s'agit d'Antioche-sur-l'Oronte², capitale de la province de Syrie et du diocèse d'Orient et longtemps troisième ville de l'empire romain (fig. 3.1). L'espace religieux de la cité d'Antioche – en tant qu'entité politique et administrative – s'organise en trois cercles concentriques : un très vaste territoire, les alentours, avec les sanctuaires de Daphné et de Méroé à

* Ce travail s'inscrit dans un ensemble de recherches et de publications préparatoires à un inventaire collectif des sources écrites de l'histoire du paysage urbain d'Antioche (sur ce projet, cf. Saliou (2012a) ; la base de données sera hébergée par le TGE Adonis). Les dépouillements nécessaires à sa rédaction ont été effectués par l'auteur dans le cadre d'un séminaire semestriel qu'elle a animé en 2009-2010.

1 Caseau (2001) ; nombreuses contributions rassemblées dans Brands, Severin (2003) ; Hahn, Emmel, Gotter (2008) ; Lavan, Mulryan (2011).

2 La bibliographie sur Antioche est immense. Le lecteur curieux d'une présentation d'ensemble peut se reporter à la synthèse – vieillie – de Downey (1961) et à quelques catalogues d'exposition et ouvrages collectifs récents : Kondoleon (2004) ; Cabouret, Gatier, Saliou (2004) ; Sandwell, Huskinson (2004). Sur les cultes traditionnels, cf. Norris (1990) ; Cabouret (1997). Sur la complexité des relations entre païens et chrétiens à Antioche, cf. Sandwell (2007) ; Liebeschuetz (2011).



G. Poccardi
(d'après R. Stillwell (éd.), *Antioch-on-the-Orontes II - Excavations of 1933-1936*, Princeton, 1938, p. 215, pl. I)

FIGURE 3.1 Antioche-sur-l'Oronte dans l'Antiquité. Vestiges attestés et proposition de restitution d'ensemble (G. Poccardi).

quelques kilomètres de la ville, l'agglomération elle-même. Dans les lignes qui suivent, on se concentrera sur cette dernière : l'échelle adoptée est bien celle de la ville et non de la cité. Au milieu du IV^e s., la population d'Antioche paraît déjà largement, voire majoritairement, chrétienne ou acquise d'une façon ou d'une autre au christianisme³, et en 528 la cité renonce au nom que lui avait donné son fondateur Séleucos pour celui de « cité de Dieu » (Théoupolis). Pourtant, dans la seconde moitié du VI^e s. encore, la ville peut passer pour un repaire d'adorateurs des dieux du passé et de magiciens⁴. Dans ce contexte mouvant, la place, le rôle et même la définition des lieux du polythéisme dans l'espace urbain et le paysage mémoriel d'Antioche évoluent. Si l'étude de cette évolution ne peut s'appuyer sur des données archéologiques encore très insuffisantes⁵, les indications fournies par les textes sont en revanche riches et nombreuses. Les sources sont pour l'essentiel tardives⁶ : à l'exception du temple de Jupiter Capitolin⁷, tous les lieux de culte connus le sont par des textes postérieurs au milieu du IV^e s. Les deux auteurs quantitativement et qualitativement les plus importants sont Libanios (IV^e s.) et Malalas (VI^e s.). Sophiste de profession, Libanios est un païen, ami de l'empereur Julien. Son œuvre est abondante et diversifiée, on utilisera ici sa correspondance et ses discours. Malalas est l'auteur, chrétien, d'une Chronique universelle dont la plus grande partie était achevée et fut publiée vers 525. Cette Chronique fait la part belle à Antioche, ville d'origine du chroniqueur. Sa transmission sous forme de résumé et son caractère souvent apparemment fantaisiste en rendent l'exploitation malaisée, mais des travaux récents ont mis en évidence son intérêt et fournissent des éléments d'une méthode de lecture critique⁸.

Les sources écrites permettent de dresser un inventaire des sanctuaires encore identifiables comme tels à Antioche vers le milieu du IV^e s. et de préci-

3 Cf. Liebeschuetz (2011) 309-313.

4 Ex. : *Vita Sym. Styl. iun.* 57 et 161 (éd. et trad. Van den Ven) ; cf. Liebeschuetz (2011) 332-335.

5 On attend beaucoup des travaux en cours sur le terrain, sous la direction de G. Brands et H. Pamir ; pour l'instant les quelques publications n'ont concerné que le rempart, voir en particulier Brasse (2010).

6 Pour une présentation générale des sources textuelles antiques relatives à l'histoire du paysage urbain d'Antioche, cf. Saliou (2012b).

7 Liv. 41. 20. 9 (*Iouis Capitolini... templum*) ; cf. Justin, Abrégé des *Histoires Philippiques* de Trogue-Pompée, 39. 2. 5.

8 Voir en particulier, après les travaux pionniers réunis dans Jeffreys, Croke, Scott (1990), les études rassemblées dans Beaucamp (2004) ; Beaucamp et alii (2006). Nous citons le texte d'après la division en chapitres et en paragraphes de l'édition de Hans Thurn (Berolini Novi Eboraci : W. De Gruyter, 2000). Sur cette édition, et plus généralement sur le texte de Malalas et les problèmes qu'il pose, voir Beaucamp (2012).

ser le devenir de certains d'entre eux, mais aussi d'étudier les modes d'apparition des sanctuaires dans les récits relatifs au passé de la ville et la façon dont ces récits constituent certains édifice en lieux de mémoire du paganisme.

1 Les sanctuaires des dieux dans l'espace de la ville à partir du milieu du IV^e s. Tentative d'inventaire

On désignera ici comme « sanctuaire » tout lieu de culte identifié comme tel et consacré à une divinité spécifique. Ainsi définie, cette notion recouvre une grande variété d'espaces ou d'équipements, d'un aménagement matériel très modeste (un autel éventuellement associé à une statue) à un vaste complexe comportant un ou plusieurs temples. L'identification d'un tel lieu pose parfois quelques difficultés : un unique sanctuaire peut en effet être désigné de différentes façons, une même divinité pouvant y être adorée sous diverses épiclèses. De plus, la mention de pratiques culturelles adressées à une divinité n'implique pas nécessairement qu'un sanctuaire distinct lui soit consacré.

Plusieurs sanctuaires avaient été désaffectés et certains détruits dans le courant de la première moitié du IV^e s⁹. Il n'est pas possible cependant de les dénombrer. En outre, à contre-courant de cette tendance, Libanios mentionne l'édification d'un « portique (...) cher à Dionysos » par le Comte d'Orient Modestus en 360-361¹⁰ ; la référence à Dionysos semble indiquer que ce portique se situait dans le sanctuaire de Dionysos ou à ses abords, et l'initiative de Modestus est présentée comme un acte de piété vis-à-vis du dieu. Les mentions plus ou moins allusives de sanctuaires fréquentés par Julien permettent de dresser une liste des sanctuaires ouverts ou rouverts et des cultes célébrés à Antioche sous son règne, parfois de façon très brève, puisque le culte de Calliope par exemple, tombé en déshérence¹¹, puis ranimé par Julien¹², décline

9 Peu après son retour à Antioche en 354, Libanios reçut le conseil de s'installer « dans l'un des sanctuaires » qu'il faut supposer désaffectés (Lib., *Or.* 1. 102). Julien fit saisir les maisons construites avec des matériaux provenant des temples (Julian., *ep.* 80). Libanios lui-même intervint alors en faveur d'un ami qui avait construit sa maison avec des matériaux provenant de la destruction d'un temple, achetés au reste fort légalement (Lib., *ep.* 724). En revanche, dans l'un de ses discours à Julien, le sophiste suggère à l'empereur que s'il avait été heureux de venir à Antioche, c'est peut-être parce qu'il avait entendu dire qu'il y subsistait de nombreux grands temples et qu'une partie de la population s'était opposée à leur démolition (Lib., *Or.* 15. 53).

10 Lib., *ep.* 196, *ep.* 617, cf. *ep.* 242.

11 Julian., *Mis.* 28 (357 c).

12 Lib., *ep.* 811. 4.

TABLEAU 3.1 *Cultes et lieux de culte mentionnés au IV^e s. par des sources contemporaines (Les lieux de culte dont la localisation antiochénienne est douteuse, et qui peuvent se trouver hors de la ville, sont signalés par un astérisque)*

	Sources (années 360-365)	Localisation	Devenir (d'après le témoignage des sources contemporaines ou les récits des sources narratives postérieures)
« Sanctuaire de Zeus »	Julian., <i>Mis.</i> 15 Lib., <i>Or.</i> 15. 80-81		Encore intact ca 385-387 (Lib., <i>Or.</i> 30. 51)
« Sanctuaire de Zeus Philios ¹³ »	Julian., <i>Mis.</i> 15 Lib., <i>Or.</i> 1. 122		
« Zeus de la ville ¹⁴ »	Lib., <i>Or.</i> 15. 79		
* « Zeus du sommet ¹⁵ »	Lib., <i>Or.</i> 15. 79		
* « (Zeus) Olympien ¹⁶ »	Lib. <i>ep.</i> 1534. 4		
Tychaion	Julian., <i>Mis.</i> 15 (cf. Amm. Marc. 22. 14. 4) Lib., <i>ep.</i> 88. 2 (en 359, ne sert plus de lieu d'enseignement) Lib., <i>ep.</i> 1406. 4 (en 363, sert de lieu de réunion)		Encore intact ca 385-387 (Lib., <i>Or.</i> 30. 51) ; les reliques d'Ignace y sont transférées au V ^e s. (Evagr. Scholast., <i>HE</i> 1. 16)
Sanctuaire de Déméter	Julian., <i>Mis.</i> 15 Lib., <i>Or.</i> 15. 79		
Sanctuaire d'Arès	Lib., <i>Or.</i> 15. 79	Ville basse : (futur) Forum de Valens (cf. tableau 3.3)	Transformé en <i>macellum</i> sous le règne de Valens ? (cf. tableau 3.3)

13 Identifiable au « sanctuaire de Zeus » également mentionné par Julien ?

14 Identifiable au « sanctuaire de Zeus » et/ou au « sanctuaire de Zeus Philios » mentionné(s) par Julien ? Identifiable au temple de Jupiter ou Zeus « Capitolin » ? (cf. tableau 3.3)

15 Il peut s'agir soit d'un sanctuaire dominant Antioche, soit du sanctuaire de Zeus Kasios.

16 Il peut s'agir d'un temple de Zeus situé à Antioche (cf. tableaux 3.2-3) ou du temple de Daphné.

	Sources (années 360-365)	Localisation	Devenir (d'après le témoignage des sources contemporaines ou les récits des sources narratives postérieures)
Sanctuaire d'Hermès	Lib., <i>Or.</i> 15. 79 (cf. Lib., <i>Or.</i> 18. 171)	Ville basse : complexe du bouleutérion- sanctuaire des Muses (cf. tableau 3.3)	Remplacé par la « basilique de Rufinos » en 393-395 (?) (cf. tableau 3.3)
Sanctuaire de Pan	Lib., <i>Or.</i> 15. 79 (cf. Lib., <i>Or.</i> 18. 171)	Flanc de la montagne (à l'arrière du théâtre) (cf. tableau 3.3)	
Calliope	Lib., <i>Or.</i> 15. 79		
Sanctuaire d'Athéna		Ville basse : (futur) Forum de Valens (cf. tableau 3.3)	Encore intact <i>ca</i> 385-387 (Lib., <i>Or.</i> 30. 51) ; accueille les avocats en 388 (Lib., <i>ep.</i> 847)
Sanctuaire de Dionysos	Lib., <i>ep.</i> 1480. 5 (célébration cultiuelle en 365)	Flanc de la montagne (cf. tableau 3.3 et Lib., <i>Or.</i> 45. 26)	Doté d'un portique en 360-361 ? (Lib., <i>ep.</i> 196, 242, 617) ; encore intact <i>ca</i> 385-387 (Lib., <i>Or.</i> 30. 51) ; le gouverneur Tisamène y siège en 386 (Lib., <i>Or.</i> 45. 26)
Isis	Lib., <i>Or.</i> 18. 171 (cf. Lib. <i>Or.</i> 11. 114 ?)		
Éleusinion (= sanctuaire d'Artémis ?)	Lib. <i>ep.</i> 1221. 2 (mentionné comme repère topographique en 364 ; cf. Lib., <i>Or.</i> 11. 109)		
Champ de manœuvres (porte Romanèsia)	Lib., <i>Or.</i> 15. 76 Lib., <i>Or.</i> 18. 169	Hors de l'enceinte, mais à proximité du palais.	Lieu de réunion des chrétiens partisans de Méléce sous Valens (Theodor., <i>Hist. eccl.</i> 4. 25. 6, 4. 26. 4 ; <i>Phil. hist.</i> 2. 15 et 19. 8. 8) ; accueille sous Théodose un ou plusieurs martyriums (cf. J. Chrys., <i>PG</i> 50, 441 ; Palladius, <i>Dialogus de uita Chrysostomi</i> , ch. 5, l. 61).

à nouveau dès 364¹⁷. Deux textes fondent cet inventaire¹⁸ : la liste, dressée par Julien lui-même dans le *Misopogon*, peu avant son départ pour la Perse le 5 mars 363¹⁹, des sanctuaires qu'il fréquente à Antioche²⁰, et l'énumération par Libanios, dans son *Discours d'Ambassade à Julien*, censé être écrit quatre à cinq mois plus tard²¹, des divinités auxquels l'empereur a offert des sacrifices en cette cité²². Le témoignage de ces textes peut être complété au moyen de références ponctuelles et confronté aux indications des sources narratives (cf. tableau 3.1).

Julien dit avoir fréquenté à Antioche les sanctuaires de la Tychè et de Déméter. Le sanctuaire de la Tychè fut le lieu d'une cérémonie lors de son entrée en charge dans le consulat²³. Les sacrifices offerts par Julien à Déméter sont également mentionnés par Libanios²⁴.

17 Lib., *ep.* 1175. 4.

18 Ces textes ont été cités ou exploités à plusieurs reprises, ex. : Downey (1961), 384 et 395, n. 90 ; Cabouret (1997) 1011, 1019 ; Hahn (2004) 132 ; Soler (2006) 14-15, sans être pour autant étudiés de façon précise.

19 Amm. Marc. 22. 3. 4.

20 Julian., *Mis.* 15 (346 b-d) : "Εθυσεν ὁ Καῖσαρ ἐν τῷ τοῦ Διὸς ἄπαξ, εἴτα ἐν τῷ τῆς Τύχης, εἰς τὸ τῆς Δήμητρος τρεῖς ἐφεξῆς ἐβάδισεν (ἐπιλέλυσμαι γὰρ εἰς τὸ τῆς Δάφνης ὁσάκις εἰσῆλθον τέμενος, προδοθὲν μὲν ὀλιγωρίᾳ τῶν φυλάκων, ταῖς δὲ τῶν ἀθέων ἀνδρῶν τόλμαις ἀφανισθέν). ἡ Σύρων ἥκει νεομηνία, καὶ ὁ Καῖσαρ αὐθις εἰς Φιλίου Διός· εἴτα ἡ πάγκοινος ἐορτή, καὶ ὁ Καῖσαρ εἰς τὸ τῆς Τύχης ἔρχεται τέμενος. Ἐπισχὼν δὲ τὴν ἀποφράδα, πάλιν ἐς Φιλίου Διὸς (...). « L'empereur a sacrifié une fois dans le temple de Zeus, puis dans celui de la Fortune, puis il s'est rendu trois fois de suite dans le sanctuaire de Déméter (j'ai oublié de dire combien de fois je suis allé au sanctuaire de Daphné, livré, par la négligence des gardiens, à l'audace des athées qui l'ont anéanti). La néoménie des Syriens est arrivée, et voici de nouveau l'empereur au temple de Zeus Philios ; c'est ensuite la fête populaire, et l'empereur se rend au sanctuaire de la Fortune. Il laisse passer un jour néfaste et se rend au temple de Zeus Philios (...) » (trad. Ch. Lacombrade, CUF).

21 Lib., *Or.* 15. 73.

22 Lib. *Or.* 15. 79 : (...) ἵκετεύει σε πόλις πολλούς σοι θεοὺς παρασχομένη συμμαχούς, οἷς ἔθυσας, οὓς ἐκάλεσας, μεθ' ὧν ἐστρατεύου, τὸν Ἑρμῆν, τὸν Πάνα, τὴν Δήμητρα, τὸν Ἄρη, τὴν Καλλιόπην, τὸν Ἀπόλλω, τὸν Δία τὸν τε ἐπὶ τῆς κορυφῆς καὶ τὸν ἐν ἄστει, παρ' ὃν εἰσῆλθες ὕπατος, ὅθεν ἐξῆλθες θαρρῶν, ᾧ γέγονας ὀφειλέτης. « La cité qui te supplie est une cité qui t'a fourni de nombreux dieux pour alliés, des dieux auxquels tu a sacrifié, que tu as invoqués, avec lesquels tu es parti en guerre, Hermès, Pan, Déméter, Arès, Calliope, Apollon, Zeus – celui du sommet et celui de la ville, auprès duquel tu t'es rendu comme consul, que tu as quitté confiant, dont tu es devenu le débiteur. » Cf. Downey (1961) 395, n. 90 ; Soler (2006) 14-15.

23 Amm. Marc. 23. 1. 6 ; Theodor., *Hist. eccl.* 3. 16. 2.

24 Lib. *Or.* 15. 79 (cité *supra*, note 22).

Julien évoque également un sanctuaire de Zeus et un sanctuaire de Zeus Philios²⁹. Ces deux sanctuaires doivent peut-être être identifiés l'un à l'autre, mais le doute est permis. Libanios, dans son *Autobiographie*, évoque une visite de Julien au temple de Zeus Philios³⁰. En revanche, dans le *Discours d'Ambassade à Julien*, Libanios ne mentionne pas explicitement Zeus Philios, et distingue « Zeus dans la ville » et « Zeus du sommet » : la mention de « Zeus du sommet » peut renvoyer à un sanctuaire situé au sommet de la montagne qui surmonte la ville³¹, distingué d'un autre sanctuaire situé dans la ville basse (cf. fig. 3.1), ou alors au sanctuaire élevé au sommet du mont Kasion, actuel Djebel Aqra, dominant l'ensemble de la région³², que visita en effet Julien³³, ce qui impliquerait alors qu'il n'y ait à Antioche même qu'un seul sanctuaire de Zeus. À propos du « Zeus de la ville », Libanios précise que Julien le visita « en tant que consul », c'est-à-dire, sans doute, lors de son entrée en charge dans le consulat³⁴, ce qui incite à identifier le sanctuaire ainsi mentionné au sanctuaire de « Zeus Capitolin » cité par Malalas³⁵, lui-même identifiable au temple de Jupiter Capitolin construit par Antiochos IV Épiphane³⁶ : s'il existait à Antioche un temple assimilable au Capitole, on voit mal comment Julien aurait pu s'abstenir de s'y rendre en cette occasion. Un petit prodige, relaté par Libanios, eut lieu dans un sanctuaire de Zeus pendant un sacrifice, peu après le départ de Julien³⁷. Le récit de Libanios implique que le temple était intégralement conservé, jusqu'à la corniche.

Libanios mentionne aussi, parmi les divinités honorées par Julien à Antioche, Arès, Hermès, Pan et Calliope. Le témoignage de Malalas confirme l'existence

29 Aucune autre source ne mentionne explicitement de sanctuaire de Zeus Philios. Eusèbe mentionne l'érection d'une statue oraculaire de Zeus Philios, peut-être dans un cadre privé, par Théotecnus, *curator ciuitatis*, sous le règne de Maximin (Eus., *Hist. eccl.* 9. 2-3). Contrairement à ce que suggère Soler (2006) 14, aucun élément ne permet d'établir la localisation d'un éventuel sanctuaire de Zeus Philios dans l'espace urbain.

30 Lib., *Or.* 1. 122.

31 Cf. *infra* et tableau 3.2.

32 Sur Zeus Kasios, cf. Saliou (1999-2000) 377-378 avec la bibliographie antérieure.

33 Lib., *Or.* 18. 172 ; Amm. Marc. 22. 14. 4 ; Malal. 13. 19. Cf. Downey (1961) 384 ; Soler (2006) 44-46.

34 Julien revêtit son quatrième consulat à Antioche le 1^{er} janvier 363. Cf. Amm. Marc. 23. 1. 1 et 6 ; Lib., *Or.* 12.

35 Malal. 10. 10.

36 Liv. 41. 20. 9.

37 Lib., *Or.* 15. 80-81.

de lieux de culte consacrés à Arès³⁸, Hermès³⁹ et Pan⁴⁰. En revanche, l'existence d'un lieu de culte spécifique consacré à Calliope n'est pas aisée à établir. Cette muse au IV^e s. l'une des divinités tutélaires de la cité⁴¹. D'après Malalas, une statue représentant une figure féminine nommée Calliope ornait le front de scène du théâtre⁴² et Libanios évoque un sacrifice offert en ce lieu à Calliope⁴³. Toutefois dans son autobiographie le sophiste rappelle une prière qu'il adressa à la statue de la muse, apparemment visible depuis une colonnade à proximité de l'agora, ce qui suggère la présence d'une statue (de culte ?) ailleurs qu'au théâtre⁴⁴. Calliope pouvait bénéficier d'un sanctuaire propre, mais aussi être honorée avec ses sœurs au sanctuaire des Muses, attesté par ailleurs⁴⁵.

Libanios rappelle également à Julien que durant son séjour à Antioche il a sacrifié à Apollon. Ces sacrifices ont pu avoir lieu dans un sanctuaire situé dans la ville même, mais aussi au célèbre sanctuaire de Daphné, qui reçut en effet la visite de Julien⁴⁶. Aucun sanctuaire d'Apollon n'étant attesté par ailleurs à Antioche même, on en conclura que c'est bien au sanctuaire de Daphné que Libanios fait allusion.

38 Malal. 9. 5, 10. 23, 11. 9, 12. 7.

39 Malal. 13. 3.

40 Malal. 10. 10.

41 Ex. : Julian., *Mis.* 15 (cité *supra*) 28, 357c ; Lib., *ep.* 1182 ; Or. 1. 102 ; Or. 20. 51 ; Or. 31. 40.

42 Malal. 11. 9.

43 Lib., *ep.* 811. 4. Pour Downey (1961) 217 et n. 73, la mention d'un sacrifice est, dans ce texte, métaphorique. Toutefois, le contexte d'écriture de la lettre (adressée à Julien, dont on connaît le goût pour le culte sacrificiel, après son départ d'Antioche) et le fait que ce sacrifice ait été effectué sur l'ordre du gouverneur Alexandros, païen militant, incitent à considérer qu'il s'est bien agi d'un acte cultuel formalisé, sanglant ou non (en ce sens, cf. Liebeschuetz (1972) 230, n. 3), d'autant plus que l'année suivante Libanios se plaindra à Létéios de ce que Calliope n'a pas été dûment honorée, les autorités ayant empêché que la fête se déroule dans les règles (*ep.* 1175. 4)

44 Lib., Or. 1. 102-103. Par ailleurs, dans un autre discours, Libanios indique que Calliope siège « au milieu de la ville » (Lib., Or. 60. 13) mais il s'agit d'opposer la ville elle-même au faubourg de Daphné et on en peut rien en déduire à propos de la localisation du lieu de culte de Calliope au sein de l'espace urbain antiochéen.

45 Cf. *infra* et tableau 3.3.

46 Cf. p. ex. Julian., *Mis.* 15 (cité *supra*). Sur le sanctuaire d'Apollon à Daphné jusqu'à la fin du Haut Empire, cf. Norris (1990) 2335-2339 ; sur les événements du règne de Julien, cf. Downey (1961) 385, 387-388 et Soler (2006) 15-18, 41, 58-62, avec les références aux sources.

En 365 ou 368⁴⁷, Libanios, dans l'*Oraison funèbre de Julien*⁴⁸, énumère les divinités honorées par Julien par des jeûnes durant son séjour à Antioche. Ces jeûnes peuvent avoir précédé des visites à des sanctuaires. Dans cette énumération figurent, outre Pan et Hermès déjà cités, Isis et Hécate. Dans l'*Éloge d'Antioche*, prononcé en 356, Libanios narre les aventures d'une statue d'Isis, enlevée d'Antioche, puis obtenant d'y être ramenée⁴⁹. Un tel récit suppose l'existence d'un sanctuaire que Julien pouvait peut-être encore fréquenter. En revanche, Malalas mentionne un sanctuaire d'Hécate à Daphné⁵⁰ mais aucun lieu de culte consacré à cette divinité n'est connu à Antioche même. De même que l'on en a écarté le sanctuaire d'Apollon, on s'abstiendra d'ajouter un sanctuaire d'Hécate à la liste des sanctuaires antiochéens. Il convient en revanche de compléter cet inventaire des espaces culturels par le champ de manœuvres, situé à proximité du palais impérial⁵¹ (cf. fig. 3.1). Il comporte en effet en 363 des autels consacrés à des divinités « maîtresses d'apporter la victoire⁵² », et c'est là que Julien fait honorer les dieux de la religion publique romaine par ses soldats⁵³. Il s'agit donc, en 362-363, d'un des espaces représentatifs de la religion traditionnelle à Antioche.

Les témoignages sont plus rares après le règne de Julien. En 365, Libanios fait allusion à une célébration au sanctuaire de Dionysos⁵⁴. De la même année date une lettre qui mentionne à la fois le pillage d'un temple de l'« Olympien » et le dépôt de nouvelles offrandes dans ce temple⁵⁵. Ce temple de Zeus « Olympien » peut être identifié à l'un des temples antiochéens (cf. tableaux 3.1-3) ou au temple de Zeus Olympien à Daphné⁵⁶. Dans son discours *En faveur des temples*, écrit entre 385 et 387⁵⁷, Libanios énumère une série de temples encore intacts⁵⁸ : les temples de la Tychè, de Zeus, de Dionysos, déjà

47 Pour une discussion (dans laquelle il n'y a pas lieu de prendre parti ici) sur la date de ce discours, cf. Van Nuffelen (2006).

48 Lib., *Or.* 18. 171.

49 Lib., *Or.* 11. 114.

50 Malal. 12. 38.

51 Sur ce quartier et son évolution jusqu'à la fin du IV^e s., cf. Saliou (2009).

52 Lib., *Or.* 15. 76, cf. Lib., *Or.* 18. 169.

53 Cf. Saliou (2009) 245, n. 106.

54 Lib., *ep.* 1480. 5. Cf. Petit (1955) 199.

55 Lib., *ep.* 1534. 4.

56 Contrairement à ce que suggère B. Cabouret (1997) 1011, aucune indication explicite du texte ne permet d'affirmer que le temple évoqué par Libanios se trouve à Antioche plutôt qu'à Daphné. Sur le temple de Zeus Olympien à Daphné, cf. Norris (1990) 2333.

57 Nous suivons ici la proposition de datation de Nesselrath *et alii* (2011).

58 Lib., *Or.* 30.51.

mentionnés, mais aussi le temple d'Athéna. En 388 enfin, Libanios fait allusion à des sanctuaires implantés « sur les montagnes » par les fondateurs grecs⁵⁹. Ouverts au culte ou non, intacts ou non, ces sanctuaires dominaient la ville, à moins que Libanios ne fasse allusion ici à des sanctuaires de hauteur répartis dans la vaste Antiochène.

L'identification comme lieux de culte de certains aménagements est plus délicate.

Dans l'*Éloge d'Antioche* Libanios fait à propos d'Artémis un récit qui, comme celui des aventures d'Isis⁶⁰, a toutes les allures d'un récit de fondation de sanctuaire. Il précise qu'Artémis porte désormais l'épithèse d'Éleusinia⁶¹. Or un « Éleusinion » est évoqué en 364 dans sa correspondance⁶². Cet Éleusinion est localisé par certains commentateurs à Daphné, car il comporte un sentier bordé de jardins⁶³, mais un tel espace peut être aménagé en pleine ville. Malalas confirme au reste l'existence d'un temple d'Artémis à Antioche même⁶⁴. Cependant, rien ne prouve qu'un temple d'Artémis ait fonctionné en tant que tel à Antioche au IV^e s. et Libanios mentionne l'Éleusinion comme un lieu de promenade, sans faire allusion à une fonction cultuelle.

Les termes « *Mouseion* » et « Sanctuaire des Muses » sont ambigus. Le mot « *Mouseion* » désigne usuellement dans l'Antiquité tardive une école de rhétorique⁶⁵. Dans l'*Éloge d'Antioche*, il alterne avec l'expression « sanctuaires [des] Muses⁶⁶ ». De l'ensemble de l'œuvre de Libanios, par ailleurs, il ressort qu'il conçoit son enseignement comme un culte rendu aux Muses et le lieu où il exerce comme un espace consacré à ces divinités⁶⁷. Malalas mentionne

59 Lib., *Or.* 56. 22 : Ταυτί μὲν οὖν ὃ τε Ἥλιος ἢ τε Θέμις ἐπίδοι θεοί τε ὦν ἐπὶ τοῖς ἡμετέροις ὄρεσιν ἱερὰ παρὰ τῶν ἐκ τῆς Ἑλλάδος δεῦρο μετωκηκότων ἱδρυμένα. « Qu'Hélios et Thémis (le Soleil et la Justice), puissent voir cela, ainsi que les dieux dont les sanctuaires ont été installés sur nos montagnes par ceux qui immigrèrent de Grèce ici ! », cf. Petit (1955) 199 ; sur la datation du discours, cf. Casella (2010) 70-72.

60 Cf. *supra* note 49.

61 Lib., *Or.* 11. 109.

62 Lib., *ep.* 1221. 2 (τὸ Ἐλευσίνιον).

63 Cf. p. ex. Cabouret (1997) 1018.

64 Malal. 10. 23.

65 Festugière (1959) 183 et note 4 ; cf. Lib., *Or.* 1. 102 ; *Or.* 4. 16 ; *Or.* 31. 47 ; *ep.* 37. 5 ; *ep.* 95. 8.

66 Le mot μουσεῖον, dans l'*Éloge d'Antioche*, désigne sans ambiguïté un local d'enseignement (*Or.* 11. 139 ; *Or.* 11. 187). Quand Libanios, dans le même discours, loue ses concitoyens de construire des sanctuaires aux Muses (*Or.* 11. 189 : Μούσαις τε ἱερὰ πολυτελῶς οἰκοδομείσθαι), il s'agit également de locaux d'enseignement.

67 Lib., *Or.* 3. 35 : μιαινὼν ταῖς Μούσαις τὸ χωρίον ; *Or.* 58. 4 : ἔξω τοῦ τεμένου τῶν Μουσῶν ; *Or.* 58. 14.

également dans son récit de la période du Haut Empire un « sanctuaire des Muses⁶⁸ » et un « *Mouseion*⁶⁹ ». Les notices qu'il leur consacre forment apparemment deux séries distinctes, ce qui pourrait suggérer qu'il s'agit pour lui de deux édifices différents. Cependant cette apparente différenciation peut n'être que l'effet de l'utilisation par Malalas de sources hétérogènes, utilisant des termes différents pour désigner une seule réalité. L'identification de l'école municipale de rhétorique au « sanctuaire des Muses » mentionné par Malalas, apparemment obvie ou du moins encouragée par le vocabulaire de Libanios, n'en est pas moins problématique, et il nous faudra y revenir. Libanios mentionne également un « sanctuaire des nymphes » mais la description qu'il en donne est celle d'une fontaine monumentale⁷⁰. L'expression « sanctuaire des nymphes », si elle n'est pas dénuée de toute valeur religieuse potentielle, ne s'applique donc pas à un lieu de culte clairement identifié comme tel.

Localisation et devenir

La situation dans l'espace urbain de quelques-uns de ces sanctuaires peut être précisée. La ville s'étire le long de l'Oronte, entre fleuve et montagne (cf. fig. 3.1). Le sanctuaire de Dionysos se trouve « sur la montagne » d'après Malalas⁷¹. Le témoignage de Libanios confirme cette indication : des ermites vivent dans les grottes des alentours⁷². Le sanctuaire de Pan se trouve « derrière le théâtre », donc aussi à flanc de montagne⁷³. D'autres sanctuaires se situent dans la ville basse, intégrés ou associés à de vastes complexes publics. Le sanctuaire d'Arès et celui d'Athéna sont voisins et donnent sur la même place, réaménagée par Valens⁷⁴, où se trouve aussi le complexe olympique formé par deux équipements sportifs, le Xyste et le Plèthre⁷⁵, et incluant d'après Malalas un sanctuaire de Zeus Olympien⁷⁶. Le sanctuaire d'Hermès est situé à proximité immédiate du bouleutérion, voisin de ce que Malalas désigne comme le « sanctuaire des

68 Malal. 10. 10, 13. 4.

69 Malal. 11. 30, 12. 33, 14. 8 (p. 278, l. +14 Thurn, cf. Jeffreys, Jeffreys, Scott (1986) 194-195) ; cf. *Chron. Pasch.* 585, l. 14.

70 Lib., *Or.* 11. 202.

71 Malal. 10. 10.

72 Lib., *Or.* 45. 26.

73 Malal. 10. 10. Cf. Downey (1961) 180. Le théâtre était aménagé au flanc de la montagne, le front de scène faisant face à la montagne (Heges. 3. 5. 2 ; Lib., *Or.* 24. 38 ; Amm. Marc. 23. 5. 3 ; Eun., *VS* 6. 5. 2) et les gradins adossés à la pente (Lib., *Or.* 10. 23 ; *Or.* 15. 48).

74 Cf. Downey (1961) 154, 215, 632-640. Sur le Forum de Valens, voir aussi Mayer (2002) 97-104.

75 Cf. Saliou (2014) 668-671.

76 Malal. 12. 2.

Muses⁷⁷ », sur une place que Gl. Downey désigne comme « l'agora hellénistique⁷⁸ » et distingue du « Forum de Valens » mais qui doit d'après J.-Ch. Balty être identifiée à la place réaménagée par Valens⁷⁹. En ce cas, il y avait sur ou autour de cette place, sous le règne de Julien, outre le « sanctuaire des Muses », au moins trois sanctuaires consacrés à des dieux olympiens. Cette place peut être localisée topographiquement, approximativement au moins : elle était en effet en partie aménagée au-dessus du torrent Parménios⁸⁰ (cf. fig. 3.1).

Le devenir de ces sanctuaires n'est connu que pour un petit nombre d'entre eux, et là encore avec des incertitudes. De la dizaine de sanctuaires inventoriés pour les années 363-365, seuls les sanctuaires d'Athéna, de Tychè, de Dionysos et de Zeus sont mentionnés comme intacts par Libanios dans son *Discours pour les Temples*⁸¹, entre 385 et 387, ce qui suggère une modification très rapide du paysage religieux de la ville, mais il est possible que Libanios se limite aux sanctuaires les plus importants ou les plus connus⁸². À rebours, la préservation des édifices eux-mêmes n'implique pas qu'ils fonctionnent encore comme lieux de culte. Au contraire, le fait que, conformément à des usages traditionnels, les sanctuaires puissent accueillir des activités diverses et non spécifiquement religieuses a certainement contribué à favoriser leur maintien en état, au moins durant le IV^e s. C'est que montrent au reste, comme on va le voir, les cas du Tychaion et des sanctuaires d'Athéna et de Dionysos.

La christianisation du champ de manœuvres s'opère en deux temps : le *campus* devient sous le règne de Valens le lieu de réunion des Méléciens ; sous le règne de Théodose I, il accueille au moins un martyrium⁸³.

En 386, le gouverneur tint ses assises sous le portique précédant le temple ou le sanctuaire de Dionysos⁸⁴.

77 Cf. Malal. 10. 10 ; Malal. 13. 3-4.

78 Cf. Downey (1961) 621-631.

79 Cf. Balty (1991) 281-285.

80 Malal. 11. 9, 13. 30.

81 Lib., *Or.* 30. 51.

82 L'usage par Libanios de l'expression « théâtre de Zeus Olympien » pour désigner le Plèthre (*Or.* 10. 6) peut suggérer que le temple existe encore à la date du discours *Sur le Plèthre*, en 383-384. De même, si l'on admet que la basilique de Rufinos qui remplace le sanctuaire d'Hermès n'a été construite qu'en 393 (cf. *infra*), le sanctuaire d'Hermès lui-même pouvait subsister jusqu'à cette date.

83 Cf. tableau 3.1 et Saliou (2009) 248-249.

84 Lib., *Or.* 45. 26. Cf. Petit (1955) 199. Ce portique est peut-être identifiable au reste à celui qu'avait fait élever Modestus (cf. *supra*, note 11).

Le sanctuaire d'Athéna accueillait en 388 des avocats en attente de plaidoiries⁸⁵. Sa proximité avec les bains de Commode, devenus à un moment indéterminé le prétoire du consulaire de Syrie et où ce fonctionnaire siégeait peut-être dès auparavant⁸⁶, explique que le sanctuaire ait pu jouer ce rôle.

Le sanctuaire d'Arès fut transformé, d'après Malalas – dont les notices sont à vrai dire assez confuses⁸⁷ –, en *makellon* (*macellum*, marché). Le fait que Libanios ne le mentionne pas dans son inventaire des sanctuaires encore debout en 385-387 peut être un indice en faveur d'une transformation intervenue dès la seconde moitié du IV^e s., d'autant plus que le sanctuaire d'Arès se situait à proximité immédiate du *Kaisareion*, qui fut l'un des équipements touchés par les grands travaux d'aménagement du « Forum de Valens⁸⁸ ».

Le cas du sanctuaire d'Hermès est le plus délicat, et il est étroitement associé à celui du sanctuaire des Muses mentionné par Malalas. Le chroniqueur date du règne de Constantin la transformation du sanctuaire des Muses en prétoire du Comte d'Orient ainsi que la destruction du sanctuaire d'Hermès et son remplacement par la « basilique de Rufinos⁸⁹ ». Toutefois cette basilique civile (ou ce portique, car le mot peut aussi avoir ce sens⁹⁰) doit très probablement être identifiée à celle qui fut construite par le célèbre préfet du prétoire Rufin en 393-395⁹¹. De plus Libanios, on l'a vu, peut désigner ou considérer le lieu où il enseigne comme le « sanctuaire des Muses » et le *Mouseion* est encore

85 Lib., *ep.* 847. 1.

86 Malal. 13. 30. Cf. Saliou (2014) 667 et tabl. 2, n° 12.

87 Malalas signale en un passage (Malal. 9. 5) que le sanctuaire d'Arès a changé de nom et est désormais désigné comme le *makellon*. Dans une autre notice, il peut soit faire état implicitement, de cette substitution, soit signaler une proximité entre les deux aménagements (Malal. 11. 9) ; ailleurs encore (Malal. 12. 7), il faut soit comprendre que c'est le *Kaisareion* qui est devenu le *makellon*, soit admettre une erreur de rédaction.

88 Malal. 13. 30. Cf. Downey (1961) 403-407, 632-640 ; Balty (1991) 282 et 284 ; Mayer (2002) 97-104.

89 Malal. 13. 3-4.

90 Zosime (5. 2. 4) mentionne le « portique royal de Rufinos », ce qui ne permet pas de trancher car cette expression peut être une périphrase pour désigner un édifice basilical (même périphrase sous-entendue : Evagr. Scholast., *Hist. eccl.* 1. 18).

91 Cf. Downey (1961) 349-350 et note 145. Le fait que le sanctuaire d'Hermès figure parmi ceux que fréquentait Julien à Antioche (cf. tableau 3.1) constitue un argument supplémentaire en faveur d'une datation basse de son remplacement par la « basilique de Rufinos ».

mentionné dans le récit de la visite d'Eudocie en 438⁹². On a vu toutefois que ces désignations peuvent avoir une valeur métaphorique ou n'avoir de valeur proprement religieuse qu'en fonction de l'interprétation du locuteur, elles ne s'appliquent donc pas nécessairement au sanctuaire des Muses mentionné par Malalas. Cependant ce sanctuaire devait être proche du bouleutérion voire contigu à ce dernier puisqu'il fut affecté par le même incendie qui détruisit la plus grande partie de l'agora sous le règne de Tibère⁹³, et le local d'enseignement de Libanios, durant sa carrière de sophiste municipal, fait partie intégrante du bouleutérion⁹⁴. Un point de repère solide est fourni par le récit d'une émeute survenue en 507 : à cette date, la basilique de Rufinos était contiguë au prétoire du comte d'Orient⁹⁵. On en déduira qu'un ensemble unissant initialement le bouleutérion, un sanctuaire des Muses et un sanctuaire d'Hermès fut réaménagé en un complexe englobant le bouleutérion, le prétoire du Comte d'Orient, une basilique civile ou un portique, et des salles de cours susceptibles d'être désignées comme « sanctuaire des Muses ». La mutation de ce complexe était achevée en 507 et avait probablement eu lieu dans le courant du IV^e s. Les grandes étapes de cette transformation avaient été l'installation du prétoire du comte d'Orient, l'aménagement de salles de cours, la construction de la basilique de Rufinos. L'école de rhétorique où enseigne Libanios est installée, sinon dans le sanctuaire des Muses ou à l'emplacement de ce dernier, du moins à proximité de cet emplacement, et la désignation de « sanctuaire des Muses », dans l'œuvre de Libanios, si elle peut être interprétée dans un sens métaphorique, renvoie aussi au souvenir d'un lieu de culte réel.

Le Tychaion a servi de local d'enseignement ou abrité des locaux d'enseignement, mais ce point n'est établi que par une lettre de Libanios, datée de 359, signalant que ce n'est plus le cas⁹⁶. Le terme τέμενος utilisé par Julien, Théodoret et Évagre le Scholastique⁹⁷ pour désigner ce sanctuaire renvoie à un espace

92 Malal. 14. 8 (p. 278, l. +14 Thurn, cf. Jeffreys, Jeffreys, Scott (1986) 194-195) ; cf. *Chron. Pasch.* 585, l. 14.

93 Malal. 10. 10. *in fine*.

94 Lib., *Or.* 1. 104 (en 354) ; *ep.* 88. 2 (en 359) ; *Or.* 1. 216 (en 383) ; *Or.* 46. 16 (en 393).

95 Malal. 16. 6.

96 Lib., *ep.* 88. 2 : (...) εἰς τὸ βουλευτήριον, οὗ διατρίβω – τὸ γὰρ τῆς Τύχης ἱερόν, ὃ καλῶς Λεόντιε, μετὰ τῆς ἄλλης αἵγλης καὶ τῶν ποιμνίων ἃ ποτε ἔτρεφεν ἐστέρηται καὶ ἔστιν ἡμῖν ἀφορμὴ δακρύων, ὁπότε παρίοιμεν – (...) : (...) au bouleutérion, où j'exerce – car le sanctuaire de la Tychè, cher Léontios, en même temps que de son éclat a été privé aussi des troupeaux qu'il nourrissait autrefois, et c'est pour nous une occasion de larmes chaque que nous y passons (...).

97 Julian., *Mis.* 15 (cité *supra*) ; Theodor., *Hist. eccl.* 3. 16. 2 ; Evagr. Scholast., *Hist. eccl.* 1. 16.

consacré défini par une enceinte, susceptible d'accueillir, outre un éventuel temple principal, divers édifices ou aménagements, et l'accueil d'enseignants et d'étudiants n'exclut pas le maintien d'une fonction cultuelle. Il n'est pas aisé de déterminer à partir de quand et pendant combien de temps le Tychaion a servi de lieu d'enseignement. Libanios associe le transfert de l'école de rhétorique du Tychaion au bouleutérion à une forme de dégradation du sanctuaire. Il est possible que la fin des activités pédagogiques au Tychaion ait correspondu à la fermeture du lieu de culte – ou alors que l'utilisation du Tychaion comme lieu d'enseignement ait correspondu à une étape intermédiaire entre l'abandon du culte et la fermeture du complexe. L'allusion de Libanios, dans *l'Éloge d'Antioche*, à la construction par les Antiochéens de « temples aux Muses » peut renvoyer à un réaménagement du complexe du bouleutérion permettant d'y installer ou d'y réinstaller l'école de rhétorique, auparavant au Tychaion⁹⁸. Quoi qu'il en soit, la dégradation subie par le Tychaion a dû rester limitée puisque sous le règne de Julien le culte y était à nouveau célébré. En 363, après le départ de Julien, c'est dans l'enceinte de ce sanctuaire que furent rassemblés les artisans et commerçants dont le gouverneur Alexandre avait décidé de vérifier les comptes⁹⁹. Encore intact vers 385-387, il fut transformé en église sous le règne de Théodose II (408-450), lors du transfert des reliques d'Ignace, martyrisé sous le règne de Trajan¹⁰⁰.

98 Dans son *Autobiographie*, Libanios indique qu'à ses débuts à Antioche en 354, alors qu'il avait ouvert une école privée en ville, ses concurrents enseignaient au « *Mouseion* » (*Or.* 1. 102), mais le mot peut s'appliquer de façon générique à un local d'enseignement, et il n'est pas exclu que cette désignation ait correspondu concrètement à un groupe de salles de cours situées dans le Tychaion. Il peut aussi s'agir toutefois de locaux associés au bouleutérion. En effet, la même année Libanios put enfin, à la faveur de la maladie du titulaire de la chaire officielle de rhétorique, s'installer « au bouleutérion » (*Or.* 1. 106). L'hypothèse d'anachronismes dans le récit de Libanios n'est pas à exclure, mais si l'on s'en tient à son témoignage, on peut admettre soit que l'école de rhétorique ait été installée d'abord (à l'époque où Libanios lui-même était étudiant et jusqu'à une date antérieure à 354 ?) au Tychaion, puis transférée au bouleutérion, soit que les cours de rhétorique aient pu être dispensés jusque vers 359 aussi bien au bouleutérion qu'au Tychaion, soit que cet enseignement, accueilli au bouleutérion en 354, ait été transféré pour un temps au Tychaion entre 354 et 359. L'hypothèse selon laquelle l'école de rhétorique se serait d'abord trouvée au sanctuaire des Muses et aurait fait l'objet d'un premier transfert au Tychaion lors des travaux d'aménagement du prétoire du comte d'Orient, puis aurait à nouveau été déplacée du Tychaion au complexe du bouleutérion, est tentante mais ne peut être démontrée.

99 Lib., *ep.* 1406. 4.

100 Evagr. Scholast., *Hist. eccl.* 1. 16. Sur cette église, cf. Mayer, Allen (2012) 81-82. Les transformations de temples en églises, après une phase d'abandon ou de changement

L'inventaire des lieux de culte encore en usage au IV^e s. comporte un certain nombre d'incertitudes et n'est peut-être pas complet : les sources relatives au passé antérieur de la ville (tableaux 3.2-3) mentionnent de nombreux autres sanctuaires, qui toutefois ont pu être désaffectés, voire détruits, avant le règne de Julien. À l'exception du cas du sanctuaire d'Hermès, le devenir de ces sanctuaires se laisse décrire en termes de modification d'affectation ou de remploi mais non de destruction. Le processus aboutit à l'aménagement d'espaces religieusement neutres et, dans un seul cas, que Malalas ne mentionne précisément pas, à une conversion en église. La documentation antiochéenne semble ainsi confirmer les acquis des recherches récentes sur le devenir des temples et l'évolution des paysages religieux dans l'Antiquité tardive : les destructions spectaculaires relèvent de l'exception plutôt que de la règle – avec toutes les nuances chronologiques et régionales possibles – et les abandons suivis de détérioration progressive ou de changement d'affectation accompagné de réaménagement semblent avoir été majoritaires, les éventuelles transformations en église étant le plus souvent postérieures de plusieurs décennies à la fin du culte¹⁰¹. À Antioche, cette conclusion reflète toutefois, plutôt qu'une réalité objective, les choix et les objectifs des deux auteurs qui constituent nos sources principales. Jean d'Antioche, qui écrit au début du VII^e s. en s'appuyant sur des sources plus anciennes, mentionne la destruction par le feu, sur l'ordre de Jovien, d'un temple de Trajan divinisé où Julien avait installé une bibliothèque¹⁰². Ce passage de Jean d'Antioche, outre qu'il mentionne un édifice religieux totalement absent des autres sources, laisse imaginer la possibilité d'une histoire violente et conflictuelle de l'évolution du paysage religieux d'Antioche. Toutefois, ce récit peut aussi s'inscrire dans le cadre, non d'une polémique proprement religieuse, mais d'une tradition hostile à la personne de Jovien¹⁰³. L'apport de ce contre-exemple n'en est pas moins de montrer que les sources écrites ne permettent d'approcher de façon concrète l'évolution des sanctuaires antiochéens que de façon très partielle et assez floue, déterminée par les objectifs des auteurs. C'est précisément cette spécificité des sources écrites

d'affectation temporaire, sont attestées dans la partie orientale de l'empire romain, mais, semble-t-il, plutôt après le milieu du V^e s. apr. J.-C., cf. Ward-Perkins (2003). La transformation du Tychaion en martyrium de saint Ignace paraît donc relativement précoce.

101 Ward-Perkins (2003) ; Hahn, Emmel, Gotter (2008) 7-11 ; Lavan (2011) xix-xxii ; voir aussi les contributions sur le devenir des temples rassemblées dans Lavan, Mulryan (2011).

102 J. Antioch. frg 273. 1-2 Roberto, frg 206 Mariev. Cf. Hahn (2004) 178-180.

103 Comme le souligne Hahn (2004) 179-180, dans le récit qui est fait de l'épisode, cet acte de Jovien suscite la colère et l'hostilité des Antiochéens. Sur l'impopularité de Jovien à Antioche, cf. Downey (1961) 398-399.

TABLEAU 3.2 *Lieux de culte mentionnés par Libanios et Malalas dans les récits de fondation ou de la période hellénistique*

Divinité concernée	Références	Mentions dans d'autres sources	Existence d'un temple consacré à la divinité concernée au IV ^e s.	Localisation
<i>Pré-fondations et fondations</i>				
Zeus Néméen/ Épikapios	Lib., <i>Or.</i> 11. 51	Non		Au pied de la montagne
Kronos	Malal. 2. 6	Non		« Silpion » (montagne)
Io	Malal. 2. 6	Non		« Silpion » (montagne)
Feu éternel/ Zeus Keraunios	Malal. 2. 12 ; 8. 1	Identifiable au temple de Jupiter Capitolin ? (cf. Liv. 41. 20. 9 ; Malal. 10. 10)	Oui (cf. tableau 3.1)	« Silpion » (montagne)
Zeus Bottiaios	Lib., <i>Or.</i> 11. 76, 88 (autel)	Non (mais cf. sanctuaire de Zeus Bôttios)		« Émathia » (montagne)
Zeus Bôttios	Malal. 8. 1 (sanctuaire)	Non (mais cf. autel de Zeus Bottiaios)		« Bôttia » (au bord de l'Oronte)
<i>Période hellénistique</i>				
Artémis Éleusinia (récit de migration divine correspondant au récit de fondation d'un sanctuaire ?)	Lib., <i>Or.</i> 11. 109	Oui ? (« Éleusinion » : cf tableau 3.1 ; temple d'Artémis, sans épiclèse : cf. tableau 3.3)	Oui ? (cf. tableau 3.1)	Cf. tableau 3.3, sanctuaire d'Artémis ?
« Dieux chypriotes » (idem)	Lib., <i>Or.</i> 11. 111-113	Non		
Isis (idem)	Lib., <i>Or.</i> 11. 114	Oui ? (cf. tableau 3.1)	Oui ? (cf. tableau 3.1)	
Minos	Lib., <i>Or.</i> 11. 125	Non		
Héraklès	Lib., <i>Or.</i> 11. 125	Oui (cf. tableau 3.3)		
Déméter	Lib., <i>Or.</i> 11. 125	Oui (cf. tableau 3.1)	Oui (cf. tableau 3.1)	

TABLEAU 3.3 *Sanctuaires et histoire d'Antioche sous le Haut Empire romain d'après Malalas*

	Connu par d'autres sources	Usage attesté au IV ^e s.	Contextes d'apparition	Type de mention Construction ou restauration
Kaisaréion	Non	Non	Récit du séjour de Jules César et des règnes de Commode, Didius et Valens	9. 5 (Jules César) ; rappel en 12. 7
Sanctuaire d'Arès	Oui (cf. tableau 3.1)	Oui	Récit du séjour de Jules César ; récit du règne de Claude ; récit du règne de Trajan	
Panthéon	Non	Non	Récit du séjour de Jules César ; récit du règne de Tibère	9. 5 (Jules César)
Sanctuaire des Muses	Cf. <i>Mouseion</i> ?	?	Récit du règne de Tibère	
Sanctuaire de Zeus Capitolin	Oui ?	Oui ?	Récit du règne de Tibère	10. 10 (Tibère)
Sanctuaire de Dionysos	Oui (cf. tableau 3.1)	Oui	Récit du règne de Tibère	10. 10 (Tibère)
Sanctuaire de Pan	Oui (cf. tableau 3.1)	Oui	Récit du règne de Tibère	10. 10 (Tibère)
Sanctuaire d'Artémis	? (cf. tableaux 3.1-2)	?	Récit du règne de Claude	
Sanctuaire d'Héraklès	Oui (cf. tableau 3.2)	Non	Récit du règne de Claude	
Sanctuaire des Vents	Non	Non	Récit du règne de Vespasien	10. 46 (Vespasien)
Sanctuaire d'Asklépios	Non	Non	Récit du règne de Domitien	10. 50 (Domitien)
Sanctuaire d'Aphrodite	Non	Non	Récit du règne de Domitien	
<i>Mouseion</i>	Cf. sanctuaire des Muses ? Voir aussi Lib., <i>Or.</i> 1. 102.	?	Récit du règne de Marc-Aurèle	11. 30 (Marc- Aurèle) ; 12. 33 (Probe le décoré)
Sanctuaire d'Athéna	Oui (cf. tableau 3.1)	Oui	Récit du règne de Commode	12. 2 (Commode)
Sanctuaire de Zeus Olympien du Xyste	? (cf. tableau 3.1)	?	Récit du règne de Commode	12. 2 (Commode)
Sanctuaire d'Hermès	Oui (cf. tableau 3.1)	Oui	Récit du règne de Constantin	

		Métonomase, transformation, substitution	Localisation
Destruction volontaire ou résultant d'un incendie ou un tremblement de terre	Point de repère		
12. 30 (Valens)	12. 16		En face du temple d'Arès ; à l'emplacement du futur Forum de Valens
10. 23 (séisme)	9. 5 ; 11. 9 ; 12. 7	9. 5 (devenu le <i>makellon</i>)	En face du Kaisaréion, près de la porte médiane Étroitement associé à Artémis et Héraklès
	10. 15 (activités de l'apôtre Paul à Antioche)		Rue des Singoi
10. 10 (incendie)		13. 4 (transformé en prétoire du comte d'Orient)	À proximité du bouleutérion
			Cf. tableaux 3.1 et 3.2 ?
			Près de la montagne
			À l'arrière du théâtre
10. 23 (séisme)			Étroitement associée à Arès et Héraklès
10. 23 (séisme)			Étroitement associé à Artémis et Arès
			Près du théâtre
			Au flanc de la montagne, près de l'amphithéâtre et du sanctuaire d'Aphrodite
	10. 50		Au flanc de la montagne, près de l'amphithéâtre et du bain construit par Domitien
	13. 8 (statue d'Eudocie)		
			En face des bains de Commode, dont il est séparé par le Xyste
			Xyste
13. 3 (préfet du prétoire)		13. 3 (remplacé par la basilique de Rufinos)	À l'emplacement de la future basilique de Rufin (elle-même située à proximité du prétoire du comte d'Orient)

qui permet de tenter d'apprécier la place de ces sanctuaires dans la représentation de la cité et la construction des discours mémoriels.

2 Les lieux du polythéisme dans le paysage mémoriel

Les sanctuaires des dieux

Libanios dans les développements historiques de l'*Antiochikos* et Malalas dans sa Chronique développent un discours mémoriel au sein duquel les sanctuaires jouent un rôle essentiel (cf. tableaux 3.2-3). À cet égard, trois moments se distinguent : les « pré-fondations » des temps héroïques et la fondation par les Macédoniens, traitées aussi bien par Libanios que par Malalas¹⁰⁴ ; la période hellénistique, dans le récit de laquelle Libanios est le seul à mentionner des sanctuaires ; la période romaine, que Libanios passe sous silence et que Malalas est seul à traiter.

Aux temps mythologiques (tableau 3.2), la fondation d'Iopolis/Iônè¹⁰⁵ sur la montagne d'Antioche est associée par Libanios à l'implantation « au pied de la montagne » d'un sanctuaire de Zeus Néméen, devenu Zeus Épikarpios¹⁰⁶, par Malalas à celle de deux sanctuaires, consacrés respectivement à Iô et à Kronos¹⁰⁷, bâtis sur le « Silpion », c'est-à-dire sur la montagne qui domine la ville¹⁰⁸ ; le passage de Persée sur le site, mentionné par Malalas, est associé par ce dernier à la fondation d'un temple « du feu éternel¹⁰⁹ » ou « de Zeus Keraunios¹¹⁰ », au même endroit. La fondation de la ville, au début de l'époque hellénistique, est marquée d'après Libanios par l'érection par Alexandre d'un autel à Zeus Bottiaios à Èmathia, au sommet de la montagne, d'après Malalas par la fondation par Séleucos d'un sanctuaire de Zeus Bôttios à Bôttia, au bord de l'Oronte¹¹¹. Certains des sanctuaires mentionnés peuvent n'avoir jamais existé et être purement fictifs, d'autres peuvent être désignés ou décrits de façon erronée ou confuse. L'alternance des deux épiclèses « Bottiaios » et « Bôttios » et la localisation différenciée, et même opposée, des lieux de culte de Zeus Bottiaios et de Zeus Bôttios suggèrent l'absence de tout référent

104 Sur le récit de Malalas, cf. Chuvin (1988) ; sur le récit de Libanios, cf. Saliou (1999-2000).

105 Sur cette double désignation, cf. Saliou (2012c) 47.

106 Lib., *Or.* 11. 51.

107 Malal. 2. 6.

108 Sur la désignation de cette montagne, cf. Saliou (2010-2011).

109 Malal. 2. 12.

110 Malal. 8. 1.

111 Lib., *Or.* 11. 76, 88 ; Malal. 8. 1.

concret ou l'effacement complet de ce référent entre le IV^e s. et le VI^e s. En revanche, le sanctuaire de Zeus Keraunios paraît identifiable au sanctuaire de Jupiter/Zeus Capitolin mentionné par Tite-Live¹¹², puis Malalas lui-même dans le récit du règne de Tibère¹¹³. L'existence à Antioche d'un culte rendu à Zeus Épikarpios n'a rien d'invraisemblable mais, en l'absence d'autre source permettant de démontrer la présence à Antioche d'un sanctuaire qui lui serait réservé en propre, on restera prudent. Quelles que soient leurs divergences, ces récits mettent en évidence d'une part l'enracinement de la mémoire urbaine dans les traditions religieuses du passé, d'autre part la structuration bipolaire de l'espace religieux de la ville, opposant tout en les associant une « ville basse » et une « acropole ». La mention par Libanios en 388 de sanctuaires réputés avoir été construits par les colons venus de Grèce « sur les montagnes », si elle concerne bien des sanctuaires situés à Antioche, montre que cette bipolarité était encore sensible à la fin du IV^e s.¹¹⁴

Dans l'*Éloge d'Antioche*, Libanios attribue aux souverains de la période hellénistique la construction de temples consacrés à Minos, Héraklès et Déméter¹¹⁵, et fait le récit d'une série de migrations divines, censées démontrer l'amour des dieux pour la ville, et concernant Artémis Éleusinia¹¹⁶, Isis¹¹⁷, un couple de dieux chypriotes¹¹⁸, puis Zeus Kasios¹¹⁹ (tableau 3.2). Contrairement à ce que l'on observe dans le cas des récits de fondation, aucune de ces mentions ou de ces narrations n'est explicitement rattachée à un élément concret de l'espace urbain. Toutefois, on a vu que le sanctuaire de Déméter était encore fréquenté par Julien, que celui d'Artémis Éleusinia est identifiable à l'Éleusinion et qu'Isis fait apparemment partie des divinités vénérées par Julien à Antioche. Il est tentant d'en déduire que les sanctuaires d'Héraklès, de Minos et des dieux chypriotes correspondaient eux aussi à des réalités concrètes de l'espace urbain antiochéen au milieu du IV^e s. apr. J.-C. (Zeus Kasios, dont le sanctuaire se trouve au sommet du mont Kasios, doit être mis à part). De ces trois sanctuaires toutefois, un seul est également mentionné par une autre source :

112 Liv. 41. 20. 9 (*Iouis Capitolini... templum*)

113 Malal. 10. 10.

114 Lib., *Or.* 56. 22, cité et traduit *supra* (note 59).

115 Lib., *Or.* 11. 125.

116 Lib., *Or.* 11. 109.

117 Lib., *Or.* 11. 114.

118 Lib., *Or.* 11. 111-113.

119 Lib., *Or.* 11. 116.

il s'agit du temple d'Héraklès, dont Malalas dit qu'il s'est effondré sous l'effet d'un tremblement de terre sous le règne de Claude¹²⁰.

Malalas ne consacre pas de développement ou de notice spécifique aux sanctuaires dans son récit de la période hellénistique, après la fondation de la ville. Les sanctuaires sont en revanche très présents dans son récit de la période romaine (cf. tableau 3.3). Il nomme ainsi, outre le *Kaisareion*¹²¹, treize sanctuaires dont cinq sont inconnus par ailleurs : le Panthéon et les sanctuaires des Vents, d'Aphrodite, d'Asklépios, et de Zeus Olympien (le sanctuaire de Zeus Olympien du Xyste, on l'a vu, est peut-être mentionné dans l'œuvre de Libanios, mais ce n'est pas certain¹²²). Aucune indication n'est fournie par Malalas sur le devenir de ces cinq sanctuaires dans l'Antiquité tardive. Ce silence du chroniqueur, joint à l'absence de mention dans les autres sources, incite à se demander s'ils ne sont pas devenus très tôt, avant même le milieu du IV^e s., de purs objets de mémoire et de récits, après avoir fait l'objet de destructions ou de réaffectations.

Trois types de mentions se distinguent.

La Chronique, à partir de la période césarienne, se présente comme une suite de récits des règnes des empereurs successifs. Dans ce cadre, les travaux de restauration et de construction constituent des rubriques obligées. Les mentions de constructions ou de restaurations de sanctuaires figurant à ce titre dans la Chronique sont en principe toujours accompagnées d'une indication de localisation¹²³. Elles ne comportent aucune intention polémique et, dans la mesure où elles constituent des éléments de démonstration de l'attention portée à la ville par le détenteur du pouvoir, elles sont porteuses de connotations positives. De telles mentions apparaissent dans le cadre du récit du séjour de Jules César pour le *Kaisareion*¹²⁴, puis dans ceux des règnes de Tibère (sanctuaires de Zeus Capitolin – non localisé¹²⁵ –, de Dionysos, de Pan¹²⁶), de Vespasien (sanctuaire des Vents), de Domitien (sanctuaire d'Asklépios), de Marc-Aurèle (*Mouseion*) et de Commode (sanctuaires d'Athéna et de Zeus Olympien du Xyste). Ces notices correspondent à la moitié des mentions

120 Malal. 10. 23.

121 Malal. 9. 5, 12. 7, 12. 16, 13. 3.

122 Cf. tableau 3.1.

123 Pour une présentation détaillée de ces notices et de leur structure, cf. Agusta-Boularot (2012) 138-141.

124 Malal. 9. 5, cf. Malal. 12. 7.

125 Malal. 10. 10. Compte tenu de l'abréviation qu'a subie la Chronique, il est possible que la localisation de ce sanctuaire ait été indiquée dans le texte original.

126 Malal. 10. 10.

de sanctuaires. Les flancs de la montagne et le secteur du théâtre apparaissent comme des lieux privilégiés de l'action de Tibère, puis des empereurs Flaviens, alors que les deux interventions de Commode concernent toutes les deux le complexe olympique¹²⁷. Plusieurs de ces sanctuaires étaient en fonctionnement sous le règne de Julien ou intacts en 385-387 : sanctuaires de Dionysos, de Pan, d'Athéna, ainsi que l'un ou l'autre des sanctuaires de Zeus. Tous, quels que soient leur état de conservation et leur statut aux ^v^e-^{vi}^e s., pouvaient être situés dans l'espace urbain par les lecteurs de Malalas grâce aux informations fournies.

Dans les autres cas, la mention du sanctuaire apparaît dans le cadre d'une évaluation des destructions lors d'un tremblement de terre¹²⁸ ou d'un incendie¹²⁹, ou pour servir de point de repère à la localisation d'une autre construction¹³⁰ : elle a une fonction instrumentale. Le sanctuaire n'est pas localisé en lui-même, il sert le cas échéant à localiser un autre édifice, d'où l'impression de circularité que donnent parfois certains passages de Malalas¹³¹. Dans le cas unique du sanctuaire des Muses, sa mention appelle un petit exposé sur la date et les modalités de sa construction à l'époque hellénistique¹³².

Dans quatre cas cependant, la mention du sanctuaire, bien qu'instrumentale, est associée à celle d'une métonomase (le sanctuaire d'Arès, désigné ensuite comme le *makellon/macellum*¹³³) ou d'une substitution d'édifice (construction de la basilique de Rufinus à l'emplacement du sanctuaire d'Hermès¹³⁴, transformation du sanctuaire des Muses en prétoire du comte d'Orient), ou encore à une précision topographique complémentaire (rue proche du Panthéon, dite rue du quartier des Singoi¹³⁵). Ces mentions témoignent d'un souci d'établir ou de maintenir un lien entre la topographie religieuse de l'époque classique et la topographie d'Antioche à l'époque de Malalas ou de ses sources directes. Même au ^{vi}^e s., le passé d'Antioche ne peut être envisagé sans ces références aux cultes

127 Sur ce complexe, cf. *supra* (notes 75-76).

128 Malal. 10. 23 : sanctuaires d'Arès, d'Artémis et d'Héraklès.

129 Malal. 10. 10 : sanctuaire des Muses.

130 Le temple d'Arès sert à localiser le *Kaisareion* (Malal. 9. 5 ; 12. 7) et la « Porte médiane » aménagée par Trajan (11. 9) ; le *Kaisareion* à son tour sert à localiser le Plèthre (12. 16) ; le Panthéon sert à localiser la prédication de Paul à Antioche (10. 15) ; le sanctuaire d'Aphrodite sert à localiser le sanctuaire d'Asklépios (10. 50).

131 Voir par exemple Malal. 10. 50, à propos des sanctuaires d'Asklépios et d'Aphrodite.

132 Malal. 10. 10

133 Malal. 9. 5 (cf. 11. 9, 12. 7).

134 Malal. 13. 3.

135 Malal. 10. 15.

traditionnels, ancrées dans des lieux précis repérables dans l'espace urbain : la topographie mémorielle antiochéenne est saturée de références à ces cultes.

La mémoire antiochéenne chrétienne – du moins celle qu'a retenue et transmise Malalas – s'est donc en quelque sorte approprié les sanctuaires polythéistes, en effaçant le souvenir d'éventuels épisodes violents. En raison en partie de la nature même des sources, cette appropriation se présente à Antioche comme un phénomène essentiellement discursif. Elle n'en est pas moins comparable à celle qui s'observe sur d'autres sites, à propos d'édifices, sinon intacts, du moins visibles dans l'espace de la ville : au milieu du ^v^e s., le chrétien Sozomène, dans son *Histoire Ecclésiastique*, évoque avec fierté les temples païens qui font la beauté et la gloire de sa bourgade natale, Bethlelea, sur le territoire de la cité de Gaza¹³⁶ ; au ^{viii}^e s. encore, c'est un bâtiment qui a toutes les allures d'un temple qui représente Néapolis (ou le mont Garizim) sur la mosaïque de l'église Saint-Étienne à Umm el Rasas¹³⁷. Les exemples du Parthénon à Athènes¹³⁸ ou du temple des Dioscures à Naples¹³⁹ montrent au reste qu'un temple peut être transformé en église sans perdre toutes ses caractéristiques architecturales et décoratives et en gardant en particulier au moins une partie des images de dieux de son décor sculpté. Ces pratiques de remploi assurant la permanence de l'image traditionnelle de l'édifice et garantissant ainsi la stabilité de la mémoire de la communauté s'inscrivent dans la même démarche que celle qui anime les mentions de sanctuaires dans la Chronique de Malalas.

La création par le discours mémoriel chrétien de nouveaux lieux du paganisme

Certains espaces, sans être des sanctuaires, peuvent accueillir des manifestations religieuses. C'est le cas du champ de manœuvres, on l'a vu, mais aussi celui de l'agora où se déroulent, sous le règne de Valens, des cérémonies festives en l'honneur de Zeus, de Déméter et de Dionysos¹⁴⁰, et jusqu'en 387 au moins, et peut-être plus tard encore, des processions liées au déroulement des *Olympia*¹⁴¹. Ces manifestations peuvent s'étendre de façon ponctuelle à l'ensemble de l'espace urbain : lorsque Julien arriva à Antioche, c'est l'ensemble

¹³⁶ Sozom., *Hist. eccl.* 5. 15. 14.

¹³⁷ Duval (1994) 179.

¹³⁸ Saradi (2011) 267-271.

¹³⁹ Dally (2003) 108-111.

¹⁴⁰ Theodor., *Hist. eccl.* 4. 25. 2 (24. 3).

¹⁴¹ Cf. J. Chrys., *De Baptismo Christi*, PG 49, col. 370 ; cf. Mayer (2012) 90.

de la ville qui résonnait des pleurs des femmes célébrant les Adonies¹⁴². La diffusion du christianisme dans la population a dû aboutir à l'étiollement, puis à la disparition de ces manifestations. Par ailleurs la religion traditionnelle est, en quelque sorte, partout, puisque les concours et les représentations scéniques sont liés à des célébrations religieuses¹⁴³, et puisque des actes religieux modestes tels qu'une libation peuvent accompagner de nombreuses activités quotidiennes. Ce sont alors les pratiques – et la conscience de leur signification – qui confèrent aux lieux leur caractère religieux. Plusieurs lieux antiochéens, tout en étant fréquentés par les Chrétiens et en étant considérés par une bonne partie de la population comme des espaces religieusement neutres, ont ainsi conservé pendant longtemps, aux yeux des tenants du polythéisme traditionnel comme à celui des prêtres et évêques soucieux de rigueur, un lien étroit avec les traditions polythéistes. Le cas du complexe olympique – associant, au cœur de la ville, des équipements sportifs accueillant une partie des épreuves des *Olympia* antiochéens¹⁴⁴ – est à cet égard révélateur, de façon presque caricaturale : l'augmentation du nombre de places de spectateurs autour de la surface de combat du Plèthre est pour Libanios un signe du déclin de la signification religieuse du concours, devenu un simple spectacle¹⁴⁵, et Jean Chrysostome quant à lui se voit réduit à donner la procession olympique en modèle à ses auditeurs, tout en leur rappelant que c'est le diable qui conduit cette procession¹⁴⁶. Certains lieux pouvaient également, sans même accueillir des rites précis, conserver aux yeux des tenants de la religion traditionnelle une aura religieuse. La possibilité de désigner ces lieux par des expressions à double sens, susceptibles d'être entendues par des Chrétiens de façon métaphorique – et donc acceptable – a pu contribuer à entretenir et à prolonger une ambiguïté salvatrice : on pouvait encore parler de sanctuaire des nymphes ou des Muses sans risque. Ces phénomènes d'ambiguïté voulue favorisaient le maintien de relations paisibles entre tenants de diverses religions.

L'apport propre de la documentation antiochéenne est de montrer comment certains édifices précis, toujours en usage dans l'Antiquité tardive, ont été désignés comme des lieux privilégiés du polythéisme par une tradition chrétienne. Ces lieux sont le théâtre et les Thermes de Trajan.

142 Amm. Marc. 22. 9. 15.

143 Sur le lien effectif entre les *Olympia* d'Antioche et Zeus Olympien, aux yeux de Libanios en tout cas, voir p. ex. Lib., *ep.* 1179. 2 ; *ep.* 1180. 1 ; *ep.* 1181. 1 ; *ep.* 1182. 2.

144 Sur ce complexe, cf. *supra*, notes 75-76.

145 Lib., *Or.* 10. Cf. Soler (2006) 87-89 (le recours à la notion de « dionysisme » par E. Soler est excessif, mais les passages pertinents et leur contexte sont présentés avec clarté).

146 Cf. J. Chrys., *De Baptismo Christi*, PG 49, col. 370 ; cf. Mayer (2012) 90.

La Chronique de Malalas comporte plusieurs mentions de sacrifices humains, répartis dans l'ensemble de l'ouvrage mais formant une série cohérente censée mettre en évidence toute l'horreur du polythéisme¹⁴⁷. Ces sacrifices sont tous identifiables ou assimilables à des sacrifices de fondation. Trois d'entre eux ont lieu à Antioche. Le premier est le sacrifice par Séleucos d'une jeune fille nommée Aimathè, qui, statufiée, devient la Tychè de la ville¹⁴⁸. Le deuxième est le sacrifice par Tibère – présenté par ailleurs comme un nouveau fondateur d'Antioche – d'une jeune fille nommée Antigonè. La mention de ce sacrifice est syntaxiquement liée aux travaux effectués par Tibère au théâtre¹⁴⁹. Le troisième enfin est le sacrifice par Trajan d'une jeune fille nommée Calliope ; or Trajan – lui aussi présenté comme un nouveau fondateur d'Antioche – est crédité de l'achèvement du théâtre au front de scène duquel il fait placer la statue de cette jeune fille, « pour la fortune (*tychè*) de la cité », au centre d'un groupe où elle est couronnée par Séleucos et son fils Antiochos¹⁵⁰. Cette fiction s'appuie sur des réalités concrètes. De façon très générale, les espaces théâtraux à l'époque impériale assumaient ou pouvaient assumer des fonctions religieuses, comme il l'a été récemment souligné¹⁵¹. Plus précisément, à Antioche, Libanios mentionne un sacrifice à Calliope accompli au théâtre en 363, peu après le départ de Julien¹⁵². Le croisement de cette indication et de celles que fournit Malalas suggère que la figure féminine du groupe statuaire ornant le front de scène du théâtre, qui relève du type de la Tychè d'Antioche et qui est intégrée à un groupe évoquant la fondation de la ville¹⁵³, a pu être interprétée comme une statue de culte de Calliope. La conjonction de ces éléments explique que le théâtre,

147 Garstad (2005) ; Saliou (2006) 78-79 et tableau 3.3 ; Agusta-Boularot (2012) 142-143.

148 Malal. 8. 12.

149 Malal. 10. 10 : ἔκτισε δὲ καὶ τὸ θέατρον, προσθεὶς ἄλλην ζώνην πρὸς τῷ ὄρει καὶ θυσιάσας κόρην παρθένον Ἀντιγόνην ὀνόματι. « Il fit des travaux de construction au théâtre, y ajoutant une volée de gradins supplémentaires du côté de la montagne et sacrifiant une jeune fille vierge nommée Antigonè. »

150 Malal. 11. 9, cf. Saliou (2006) 80-81 ; cette statue correspond au type canonique de la Tychè antiochéenne (Meyer 2006, 73-76). L'édicule tétrastyle mentionné par Malalas, au-dessus duquel est juché le groupe, est peut-être un équivalent du « baldaquin » du front de scène du théâtre de Palmyre, cf. Fourdrin (2009) 209-215 et 225-226 ; voir aussi, pour un état des lieux des interprétations antérieures, Meyer (2006) 216-217.

151 Moretti (2009).

152 Lib., *ep.* 811. 4, cf. *supra*, note 43.

153 Cf. *supra*. Pour M. Meyer, l'assimilation de la Tychè à Calliope est postérieure au IV^e s. et doit être attribuée à Malalas lui-même, cf. Meyer (2006) 73-76 ; *contra* Cabouret (1997) 1015-1016. En ce cas, la mention d'un sacrifice à Calliope au théâtre en 363 devient très difficile à expliquer.

dans le discours mémoriel que présente Malalas, puisse être devenu à la fois un lieu de mémoire de la fondation initiale d'Antioche et de ses diverses refondations réelles ou imaginaires, et un lieu de mémoire de trois sacrifices humains, c'est-à-dire de l'horreur du polythéisme. La réactivation de cette mémoire était rendue possible à chaque visite au théâtre, dont le fonctionnement est attesté jusqu'en 588 au moins¹⁵⁴.

Les Thermes de Trajan eux aussi paraissent être devenus, dans la mémoire antiochéenne, un des hauts lieux du polythéisme. L'association de l'usage des thermes à des pratiques religieuses traditionnelles est attestée par exemple par le témoignage d'Eusèbe de Césarée à propos de la persécution de Dioclétien en Palestine¹⁵⁵ et la fréquentation des thermes pouvait susciter de véritables cas de conscience pour les tenants des religions monothéistes¹⁵⁶. Le lien ainsi établi entre édifices thermaux et polythéisme a pu être resserré par le rôle de lieu d'exposition de statues joué par les bains : certaines au moins des statues qui y étaient montrées au public pouvaient être d'anciennes statues de culte, provenant de temples désaffectés¹⁵⁷. Le danger de transformation des thermes en lieux de survie du « culte des idoles » que pouvait causer ce transfert est souligné par une loi de 415 concernant l'Afrique et prescrivant que les anciennes statues de culte transférées dans les bains et autres lieux publics en soient retirées¹⁵⁸.

Trajan fait partie des nombreux empereurs auxquels Malalas attribue la construction de thermes à Antioche¹⁵⁹. Libanios et Évagre le Scholastique¹⁶⁰ confirment l'existence à Antioche de bains attribués à l'empereur Trajan, toujours en usage en 387 puis en 458. Le texte d'Évagre permet en outre de préciser la localisation de ces thermes, qui se trouvaient « dans la Vieille Ville », c'est-à-dire dans la partie de la ville située sur la rive gauche de l'Oronte (cf. fig. 3.1). Par ailleurs, dès la fin du IV^e s., on honore à Antioche la mémoire de Drosis

154 Evagr. Scholast., *Hist. eccl.* 6. 7.

155 Euseb., *De mart. Pal.* 9. 2

156 Cf. Friedheim (2006) 69, 98-106 ; Bady, Foschia (2014).

157 L'un des exemples les plus spectaculaires de ces thermes-galeries de sculpture est la collection statuaire des thermes du Zeuxippe à Constantinople, cf. Basset (1996) ; Basset (2004) 51-58. Un groupe d'inscriptions rend compte du transfert de statues – dont certaines au moins avaient assurément été des statues de culte – de lieux dits « sordides » – qui peuvent être des temples désaffectés ou en ruines – vers des bains, à Césarée de Maurétanie (*CIL* 8. 20963), Pouzzoles (*CIL* 10. 3714, cf. *AE* 2003, 338), Bénévent (*ILS* 5480).

158 Cod. Theod. 16. 10. 20. 3.

159 Malal. 11. 9. Pour un inventaire des bains antiochéens, cf. Saliou (2014).

160 Lib., *Or.* 32. 2. ; Evagr. Scholast., *Hist. eccl.* 2. 12.

(Drusis, Drosinè), martyre sous le règne de Trajan¹⁶¹. Au début du VI^e s. au plus tard, comme en témoigne Sévère d'Antioche, Drosis est associée à cinq chrétiennes dont le martyre est étroitement lié aux Thermes de Trajan¹⁶². Le récit de ce martyre est connu par plusieurs sources¹⁶³. Les chrétiennes sont brûlées (vives ?), et leurs cendres sont utilisées pour fabriquer d'abord des chaudières, puis des statues exposées dans le bain que Trajan vient de faire construire. Au IV^e s., le païen Libanios signale qu'une visite à ces thermes est pour lui l'occasion d'effectuer un acte religieux, dont il ne précise au reste pas la nature et qui pouvait être très discret¹⁶⁴. Cette remarque incidente incite à prendre au sérieux les indications de la Passion syriaque de Drosis et du texte du *Synaxaire de Constantinople* sur le caractère ostentatoirement païen des Thermes de Trajan, inaugurés le jour d'une fête d'Apollon et construits à l'intention des « idolâtres ». Il se pourrait que ces bains aient fait l'objet d'une forme de concurrence entre les divers groupes religieux de la cité et que la légende des cinq martyres ait constitué pour les Chrétiens un moyen de s'approprier symboliquement un espace encore investi au moins partiellement par les pratiques religieuses traditionnelles au IV^e s. Quoi qu'il en soit, la légende des cinq martyres a permis de constituer cet édifice, encore en usage et quotidiennement fréquenté jusqu'en 458 au moins et sans doute bien plus tard, en lieu de mémoire de la persécution des Chrétiens et de la violence des « idolâtres ».

Conclusion

La documentation rassemblée permet d'établir l'existence à Antioche au milieu du IV^e s. de neuf sanctuaires identifiables comme tels et susceptibles d'accueillir des cultes : sanctuaires d'Arès, d'Athéna, d'Hermès, de Dionysos, de Pan, de Zeus, de la Tychè, de Déméter, attestés par des sources contemporaines, auxquels s'ajoute le temple de Trajan divinisé. Sous le règne de Julien, deux espaces ont également accueilli des cultes de façon ponctuelle, le théâtre et le champ de manœuvres. Le statut et l'état de conservation des sanctuaires des Muses, d'Artémis et d'Isis sont incertains, et l'existence de deux, voire trois sanctuaires de Zeus est possible. Des neuf sanctuaires assurés, quatre au moins

161 J. Chrys., *Laudatio Drosidis*, PG 50, col. 683-694.

162 Sever. Antioch., *Homil. Cathedr.* 114 (PO 26. 3, 296-299 [350-353]).

163 Sever. Antioch. (cf. *supra*) ; Malal. 10. 10, cf. Agusta-Boularot (2012) 143-145 ; *Drusis*, BHO 265 (Lewis 1900, 70-76) ; *Drosis seu Drusilla*, BHG 219^e (*Synaxaire de Constantinople*, Delehaye (1902) 553-556). Cf. Saliou (2012b) 35-36 ; Saliou (2014) 674.

164 Lib., *Or.* 32. 2.

étaient encore intacts sous le règne de Théodose, dont trois (les sanctuaires de la Tychè, d'Athéna, de Dionysos) accueillaien ou avaient accueilli diverses activités profanes dans la seconde moitié du IV^e s. ; un seul semble avoir fait l'objet d'une destruction violente sous le règne de Jovien, deux (les sanctuaires d'Arès et d'Hermès) ont cédé la place à des édifices profanes, de même que le sanctuaire des Muses, transformé probablement dès la première moitié du IV^e s. Le Tychaion fut transformé en église au V^e s. Les textes toutefois permettent plus aisément de saisir des représentations que des réalités objectives. À cet égard, il faut souligner que les conclusions de cette étude concernent bien Antioche et non Théoupolis. La véritable refondation dont la ville a fait l'objet, en plusieurs étapes, sous le règne de Justinien¹⁶⁵, peut avoir entraîné une mutation profonde de son identité et de sa mémoire mais la Chronique de Malalas reflète un état antérieur à cet éventuel changement. La Chronique elle-même n'est qu'un texte, élaboré par un auteur singulier à partir de ses sources, et d'autres discours chrétiens sur le passé d'Antioche étaient possibles. Quoi qu'il en soit, il en ressort que les mutations d'affectation et les destructions de sanctuaires n'ont pas abouti à leur disparition du paysage mental et mémoriel qui contribuait à la constitution de l'identité de la cité. À Antioche, la polémique antipaïenne s'est reportée sur le théâtre et les bains de Trajan. Elle a eu comme résultat de transformer deux édifices publics civils en hauts lieux du polythéisme dans ce qu'il a de plus dangereux et condamnable aux yeux des chrétiens. De fait, il était assurément plus efficace de choisir comme lieux de mémoire du paganisme des édifices encore en usage, bien visibles dans l'espace urbain et aisément accessibles, plutôt que des ruines ou des édifices sans rapport fonctionnel avec les temples qu'ils avaient remplacés. En ce sens la christianisation a pris la forme, non seulement d'une désécularisation, mais d'une paganisation.

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Holy Goals and Worldly Means. Urban Representation Elements in Church Complexes

Ine Jacobs

Introduction

When churches are the object of archaeological research, excavations very often stay limited to the prayer hall. Only occasionally do they also include the atrium and the entrance from the street, but subsidiary buildings almost always remain buried. This is no doubt at least partially a consequence of the fact that churches have long been considered solely as houses of prayer, exalting the power and glory of the Christian god. Consequently, the inside of the prayer houses has received the lion's share of attention, both in Antiquity¹ and in modern scholarship, whereas all additional functions that church complexes could fulfil, and thus also the rooms they were housed in, have often

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- 1 Initially, a description of the architecture was subordinated to an account of the correct course of action during mass (e.g., *Constitutiones apostolorum* 11.57.3–12 or *Testamentum Domini* 1.19). When architecture became more prominent, interior embellishment—especially an elaborate and colourful marble decoration or adornment with gold and silver—received the most attention. Other recurrent themes comprised the symbolic aspects of church architecture and the church's function in terms of theological considerations, as well as the integration of the church within the city and, foremost, its adornment of the city: Saradi (2006) 62, 65–67. Rare, but quite informative, are the documents on how to construct a church. One of these is a chapter called 'How to Build a Church' preserved in a Syriac version of the *Testamentum Domini nostri Jesu Christi*. The treatise is not earlier than the fifth century, and the language used suggests that it represented Syrian practice at the time. Similar guidelines can also be found in a letter of St. Gregory of Nysa to Amphilochius, bishop of Iconium (*Ep.* 25). Sadly enough, both texts again remained limited to the interior decoration and organisation of a church building. Even though they did not focus on exterior architecture, some authors did provide vital information on the appearance of churches and the admiration for certain elements. Gregory Nazianzenos, in his description of a church at Nazianze (Greg. Naz., *Or.* 18.39), expressed his appreciation for, among others, the neat ashlar construction of its walls. One of the most informative authors was Chorikios of Gaza. His descriptions of the Churches of St. Sergius and St. Stephen in the panegyric of Bishop Marcian contain quite a few details on church entrances, their atria and general external appearance (for instance, Chor., *Laud. Marc.* 1.17; 1.20; 11.31; Chor., *Or.* 3.61).

been disregarded or have been considered as necessary distractions from the religious core business. Only in the last decades have we started to reconstruct complete church complexes and, consequently, are just beginning to understand how they functioned in relation to the city at large or the surrounding countryside.

The fact that the study of ecclesiastical architecture has remained such an underexplored field is regrettable, as this material culture has much to offer to all those studying the late antique and Early Byzantine period and the development of Christianity in particular. The way that church leaders conceived the surroundings of the actual prayer hall can give details on, for instance, the practical organization of ecclesiastical life, on the dependence on or involvement of the Church in the local economy, on how church leaders saw themselves and how they wanted to appear to their congregation, or on their social ties with local secular communities and higher secular and religious powers. One way to explore this last aspect is to evaluate the incorporation of secular building components, decoration and mechanisms into ecclesiastical architecture. Up until now, the only research that has touched on this matter is that on episcopal palaces. The meaning of the location of these residences and their equipment with features such as dining halls and apsed reception halls—the centres of the luxurious mansions of the late antique elite—is slowly being discovered.²

The purpose of this article is to trace the transposition of large-scale elements of public architecture within church compounds, but also outside the prayer hall, in the provinces of the East Mediterranean and North Africa.³ More in particular, I investigate the appearance of colonnaded streets, sigma-plazas, nymphaea, arches and tetrapyla. All these architectural forms were not only very familiar to every city inhabitant, but also highly charged with meaning and, certainly in the case of arches and tetrapyla, invested with power. Although within this overview, some general reasons to associate these elements with houses of god are suggested, a detailed discussion on the particular

2 Uytterhoeven (2007) 39–40 for a recent bibliography; Ceylan (2007) for a discussion of episcopal complexes in Asia Minor; Marano (2007) for North Italy. Miller (2000) 12–53, in her review of the medieval bishop palaces in Italy, also traces their genealogy to Late Antiquity.

3 As opposed to the so-called ‘triumphal arch’ inside the church building, where the arch of the apse opens into the nave, see Roux (2009). For the purpose of this article, I will limit myself to church compounds themselves, where we can be certain that the ecclesiastical authorities ordered their creation, although it is clear that the influence of these Christian centres also extended into the remainder of the city. The resulting interventions within the wider pre-existing urban space are discussed in Jacobs (2014).

influencing factors (such as the identity of the initiators, the importance and function of the church site within the settlement, the status of the settlement in the wider ecclesiastical and secular administration and so on) falls outside the scope of this contribution. Finally, the geographical scope of this study is very large, and the state of survey, excavation, and also publication ranges from region to region and site to site. Moreover, as said above, the surroundings of prayer halls have not been given much attention in the past. Consequently, this overview will demonstrate the variety of mechanisms applied within Christian complexes of diverse status, but it is far from exhaustive.

A Short Introduction to the Settlements and Their Churches (Fig 4.1)⁴

Architectural forms deriving from public secular architecture can be found both in church complexes located in existing cities and in pilgrimage centres. Unsurprisingly, within cities, especially the cathedral churches are relevant. As they became the centre of the daily dealings of the bishop and his entourage, these ecclesiastical complexes often occupied a sizeable portion of the total city surface. Next to the cathedral church, a baptistery was present, often an associated episcopal residence, and frequently also offices, storerooms, gardens and additional chapels, among others. Those relevant for the subject under excavation include the Christian quarter of Djemila, the 'Cathédrale à l'est' at Apamea, the Basilica of Paul at Philippi, the cathedral at Stobi, the Lechaion basilica at Korinth and 'la cathédrale double' at Salona. Other churches within the city could also be substantial in size, but their prayer halls were not often accompanied by a large variety of additional spaces. Church A at Philippi and Basilica A at Thebes appear to have been neighbourhood churches, whereas the *Basilica Maiorum* and the basilica at Damous-el-Karita at Carthage were cemetery churches, and the Rotunda, also at Damous-el-Karita, was a martyrion.

Besides episcopal complexes, also Christian pilgrimage centres were equipped to receive and manage a large number of visitors and therefore united a diversity of spaces and rooms. Examples featuring in this paper are Tebessa, Abu Mina, Qal'at Si'man, Resafa, Meriamlik and Alahan. Typical is that these complexes often appeared outside the existing cities, so that they could develop freely in all directions, having to take only local topography into account. In addition, many of them were surrounded by an enclosure wall,

4 Throughout the text I have preferred to use the traditional names coined by the excavators.

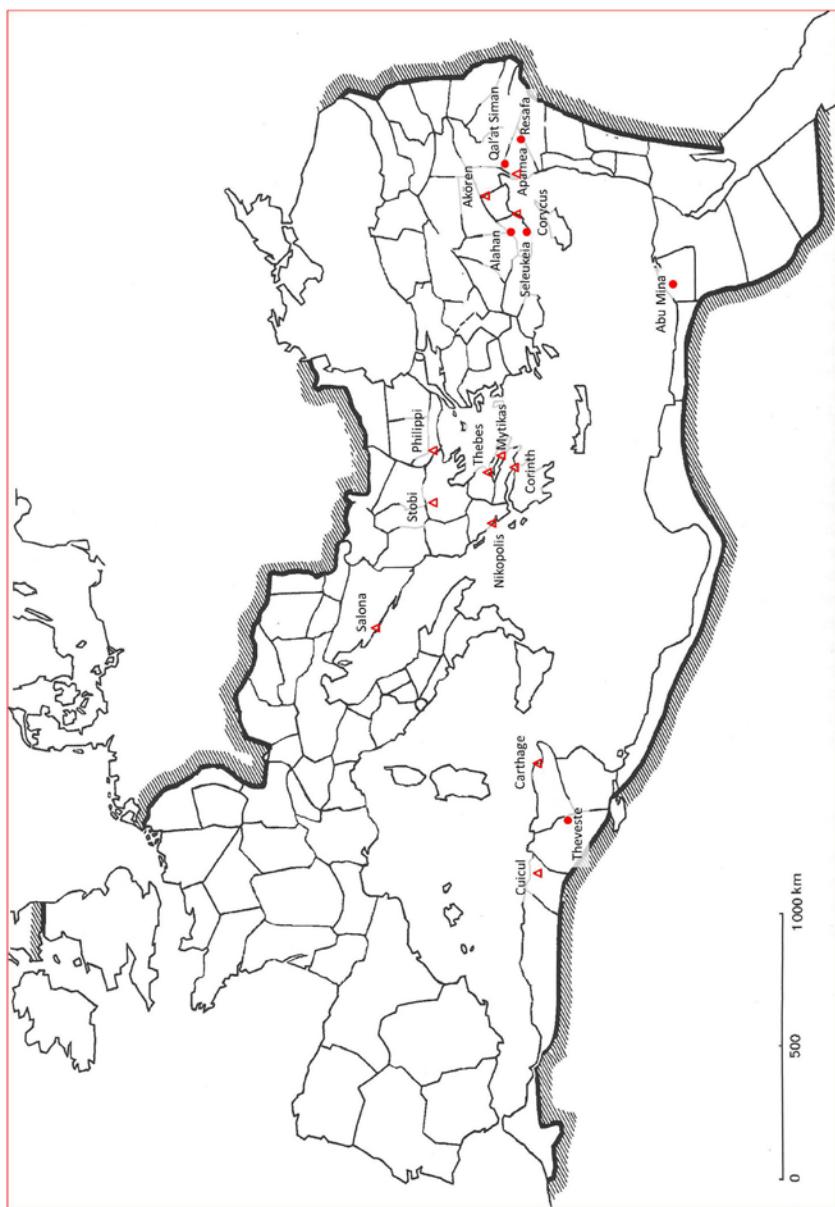


FIGURE 4.1 Map with indication of the sites discussed (Δ urban churches, • pilgrimage centres).

which, as opposed to the barriers surrounding episcopal complexes located within the general city wall, frequently did serve a defensive purpose.⁵

These church compounds have been discussed elsewhere and there is no need to describe them fully in detail once again. After a short introduction of each individual site, I will concentrate only on the architectural features mentioned above, starting with their occurrence within the existing secular city and then their transposition to the ecclesiastical domain.

Churches Connected to Urban Life and Death

The oldest church building that will be discussed in this article was located in Carthage (modern Tunisia), prosperous capital of *Africa Proconsularis* and one of the largest cities of the Roman world.⁶ Carthage possessed a rich Christian history as well, with a large number of martyrs. Several churches rose up within the city centre, maybe already by the later fourth century,⁷ but many more were to be found within the cemeteries encircling the city centre, where they became the foci of elaborate cults of the dead.⁸

Among these cemetery basilicas were the *Basilica Maiorum*, dedicated to the martyrs Felicitas and Perpetua, and a site designated as Damous-el-Karita. The first was located at almost a kilometre from the Theodosian walls, in a burial area to the northeast of the town centre.⁹ The basilica was a large construction of 61 by 45 m (without the apse), divided into 9 bays by 8 rows of columns, with an atrium in front. Construction took place probably already in the 320's, making it one of the oldest churches of Carthage. At the end of the century, another cemetery basilica rose up some 150 m from the Theodosian walls, along the *cardo maximus extraurbanus*, leading to Megara. The Christian

5 Of the sites featuring in this article, only Alahan was not enclosed by an additional wall, but the site was located in an easily defensible position, on a narrow ledge 300 m above the valley below.

6 Leone (2007) 25; Sears (2007) 37–45 for a concise overview of the history of the city in Late Antique and Early Byzantine times.

7 The earliest churches possibly include the basilica of Carthagenna near the harbour, the basilica of Dermech I in the north of the city and an underground baptistery found in the Sayda, see Ennabli (1997) 77–82, 107–11; Leone (2007) 38, 109. Leone (2007) 96–111 gives an overview of the Christian topographical organization of the city and the spread of churches in and around the city. Ennabli (1997) 59–110 for a more elaborate description of their remains.

8 For the cemetery churches of Carthage, see Ennabli (1997) 7, 111–141. Macmullen (2009) discusses funerary meals associated with the cult of martyrs and the practical organization of such gatherings at cemeteries. See p. 53–67 for North Africa.

9 Ennabli (1997) 133–134.

complex was clearly aligned with this road.¹⁰ The original cult focus was probably the fourth-century trefoil chapel with a marble sarcophagus located in the centre of the courtyard.¹¹ A large basilica was added at the end of the fourth or the early fifth century. This was a very large monument of 65 by 45 m, divided into 9 aisles by 8 rows of columns, with a semicircular atrium with a diameter of 45 m in front and a trefoil chapel with important tombs at the back.¹² With time, tombs would be inserted everywhere underneath the floor of the atrium and that of the church itself.¹³ The main basilica of Damous-el-Karita came to be adjoined by a second basilica and surrounded by several *memoriae*, so that the entire complex attained a length of over 200 m. The grandest among the *memoriae* was the so-called Rotunda, a centrally planned martyrium with an underground crypt from Justinianic times, postdating AD 523 (Fig. 4.2).¹⁴

Cuicul (modern Djemila in Algeria) was a much smaller town located inland in the province of *Mauretania Sitifensis*, with an estimated population of ca. 10 000. The inhabited area constantly expanded throughout the Roman centuries, mainly in a southern direction. The addition of an ecclesiastical quarter—the ‘Church of Cresconius’—in the utter south of the city in the early fifth century AD can be considered to be the final step of this expansion.¹⁵ The area consisted of three basilicas, a baptistery, auxiliary rooms, a bath and a peristyle house near the entrance from the main street, which may have been the episcopal residence.¹⁶ In the same period, four more churches were constructed at Cuicul.¹⁷

Apamea, in northern Syria, received the status of provincial capital in the early fifth century, when the province of *Syria Secunda* was separated from *Syria Prima*. The first churches had already appeared in the city before this administrative change. Among them was a martyrion in the shape of a Tetraconch, which largely reused the flooring of a philosophical school established just a few decades before. Around this Tetraconch an extensive episcopal complex, occupying two *insulae* or more than 1 ha, would develop.¹⁸ The largest renovation

10 Dolenz (2001) 11.

11 Dolenz (2000); Leone (2007) 111.

12 Ennabli (1997) 123.

13 Ennabli (1997) 123.

14 Ennabli (1997) 127–129; Dolenz (2001).

15 In this case, local aristocrats could be connected to the laying of the church mosaic and presumably the construction of the basilica. Lepelley (1981) 404, 412 argues that they were members of the local aristocracy, who a few decades before were still investing in secular constructions such as the judicial basilica.

16 Février (1968) 74. For a discussion on the complex, see Christern (1976) 137–144.

17 Lepelley (1981) 414; Sears (2007) 58.

18 For a detailed description of the building history, see Balty (1972); Balty (1981) 105–115.

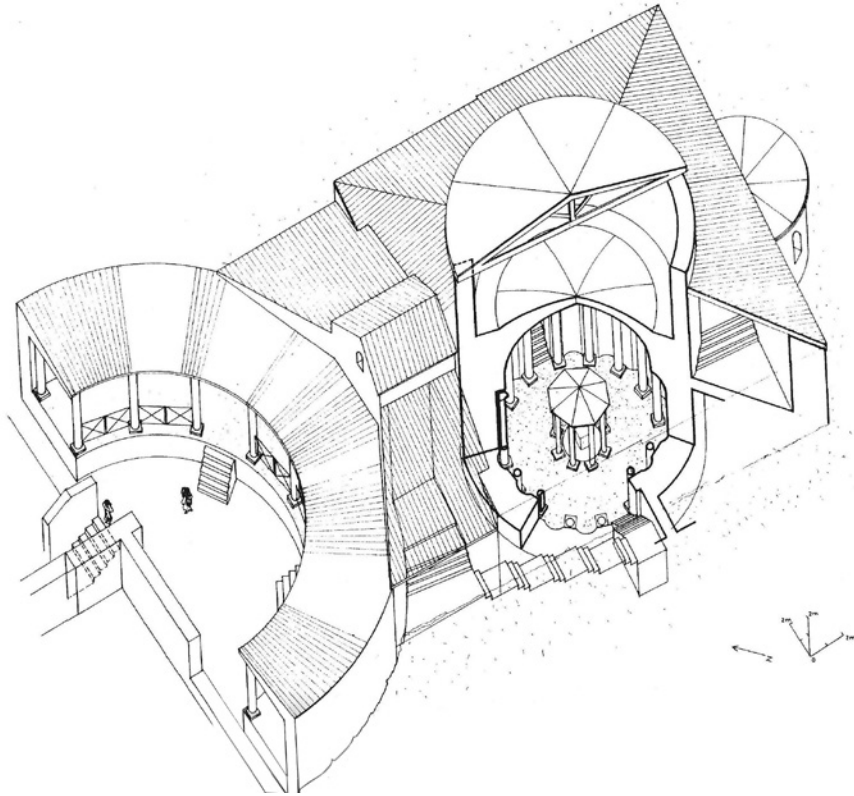


FIGURE 4.2 *The Justinianic Rotunda at the Damous-el-Karita site at Carthage (Dolenz 2000: 192, fig. 85).*

phase of the complex could be securely dated thanks to an inscription mentioning the dedication of the church by bishop Paul in AD 533.¹⁹

The city of Philippi in Macedonia received seven different churches between the mid-fourth and the late sixth century AD. Among them were three substantial church complexes located in the centre of the settlement. Two of them, the mid-fourth century cathedral church dedicated to the Apostle Paul and the so-called Basilica A of late fifth-century date, were accessible directly

19 The second phase of the church was dated by the dedicatory inscription installed on a plate of pink marble in the pavement of the Portico A, located right in the axis of the space. It mentions the dedication of the church under the episcopate of bishop Paulus in AD 533. Three other inscriptions mentioned that the same Paulus was responsible for the capitals of the inner aisle, the *opus sectile* pavements found throughout the complex, both in the church and the auxiliary structures, and also the mosaic in the southeast of the tetraconch, see Balty (1972) 192–193; Balty (1981) 109–114.

from the main thoroughfare, the Via Egnatia, which passed through the city centre. After a disastrous fire, the first cathedral church was replaced by a more exceptional octagonal building in the early fifth century. This was rebuilt once more in the beginning of the sixth century, when it was also equipped with an atrium and baptistery. The third monumental church of Philippi, Basilica B, said to have been inspired by the plan and architectural decoration of Hagia Sophia at Constantinople, was established in a Roman *palaestra* immediately to the south of the Roman forum, which was still a flourishing marketplace also in this period.²⁰

Thebes (modern Nea Anchialos in Greece) was, with its estimated area of 25 ha, one of the more modest cities of the Empire but an important port nonetheless. The late antique settlement possessed four intramural and five extramural churches, which are its most remarkable and best researched monuments. All of them could be dated between the fourth and the sixth century AD. The largest basilica, Basilica C, located next to the city walls, could be identified as the cathedral church, as (part of) an episcopal residence, recognizable by the lay-out of the rooms next to the church, the decoration and finds. Originally, it was constructed in the fourth century, but the church and complex grew substantially during the fifth and sixth century.²¹ The second largest church is Basilica A, or the Basilica of Saint Demetrios. Like Basilica C, this church also possessed a baptistery. Opposed to the cathedral church, however, this basilica was located almost in the city centre. Remarkable was that it was also surrounded by an enclosure wall on its north, east and south side, whereas its façade was fronted by a more classical portico.²²

Although the beginnings of Christianity at Korinth, capital of the *provincia Achaia*, supposedly go back until the 1st century AD and many of its church leaders appear in sources of Roman and Late Roman date, one had to wait until the early sixth century for monumental churches to appear.²³ Although the old centre itself possessed both parish churches and cemetery basilicas,²⁴

20 Brenk (2003) 9. See Sève, Weber (1986) 550 for the Constantinopolitan source of inspiration.

21 Karagiorgou (2001a) 57–58; Karagiorgou (2001b) 189–191.

22 Karagiorgou (2001a) 56; Karagiorgou (2001b) 187. A high wall is also known to have surrounded the sixth century patriarchate complex at Constantinople, located next to St. Sophia, see Janin (1962); Dirimtekins (1963–1964), and the sixth century *epikopeion* at Side in Asia Minor cf. Mansel (1978) 275–284. Both complexes are also discussed in Ceylan (2007) 172–173, 174–176. Finally, the ecclesiastical centre of Abu Mina was also surrounded by an additional enclosure wall, cf. *infra*.

23 Brown (2008) 61–65.

24 Brown (2008) 166–167.

the cathedral church was located not in Korinth itself, but in Lechaion, the western port of the city.²⁵ Construction may have started in the 450's, but was only complete after 525.²⁶ The basilica is built on a sand spit separating the inner basins of Lechaion harbour from the sea. It consists of a three-aisled structure with a transept and single apse at the east end and two courtyards in the west. An episcopal residence, comprising several apsidal dining rooms, has been identified south of the inner atrium.²⁷ The total length from outer atrium to apse is 180 m and is comparable to the size of the original basilica of Saint Peter in Rome. It counts among the largest such structures anywhere. Indeed, the length and height of the building made it a prominent landmark for those looking towards the sea from the city and for travellers arriving by land and sea (from the West). The floors were paved with opus sectile panels and the lower walls were clad with marble revetment. The uniform columns, capitals and screens were made of Proconnesian marble and therefore appear to be, as indeed the whole church may have been, an imperial donation.²⁸

Although Nikopolis (western Greece) is famous foremost due to Octavian's victory there, the city also flourished as the provincial capital and metropolitan see of Epirus in Late Antiquity.²⁹ Churches have been found both within (four) and outside (two) the imposing early fifth century walls.³⁰ The episcopal basilica, Basilica B, was situated in the centre of the fortified area. This five-aisled church, which measured ca. 30 by 70 m, was originally dated to the years 450–470 based on its morphological resemblance to the Lechaion Basilica at Corinth.³¹ But since the date of this massive monument has now been pushed forward to the sixth century, a revision of the date of the Nikopolis church is also in order. A somewhat later date would in any case also comply better with the dedicatory description of bishop Alkison inside Basilica B, who is known to have died in office only in AD 516.³²

25 Krautheimer (1986) 131–34; Sanders (2005) 437–439; Brown (2008) 171–172.

26 Slane, Sanders (2005) 291–292 for the revised ceramic chronology of the Lechaion basilica.

27 Brown (2008) 171.

28 Caraher (2011) for a discussion on the patterns of funding at Corinth and the Lechaion basilica.

29 Bowden (2003) 47, 50–51; Bowden (2007).

30 For the fortifications of Nikopolis, which were indeed imposing, but also only surrounded one sixth of the Roman town, see Bowden (2001); Bowden (2003) 89–90, 93–96; Bowden (2007) 144–146. The two churches outside the walls almost certainly postdate the construction of the enceinte, see Bowden (2003) 96.

31 Bowden (2003) 123; Bowden (2007) 144.

32 This discrepancy led to the assumption that bishop Alkison only added a subsidiary chapel at a later moment in time, see Kitzinger (1951) 89; Bowden (2003) 116; Bowden (2007) 144.

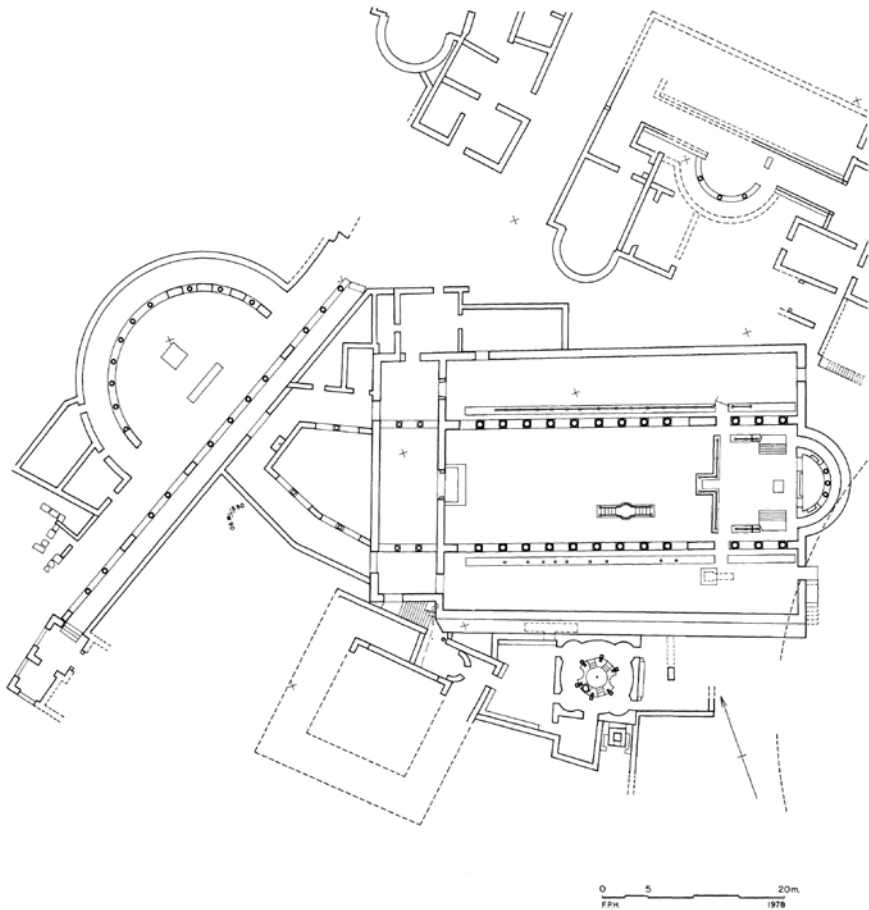


FIGURE 4.3 Restored plan of the episcopal complex at Stobi with the semicircular plaza in front and the bishop's residence to the north of the church (Wiseman (1978) 396, fig. 4).

Stobi, the capital of the province *Macedonia Salutaris*, was likewise given multiple churches with elaborate mosaic floors located within the city centre itself.³³ The oldest of these, the episcopal basilica, was built next to the main street already in the first half or around the middle of the fourth century. At the end of the fourth century, an episcopal complex had been added to the northeast. The church itself underwent a major rebuilding phase in the first half of the fifth century, during which the remains of the oldest buildings were integrated in a huge artificial terrace of more than 4 m high. On top of this, a new church complex measuring 52.5 by 32 m, with an atrium in front, surrounded by multiple annexes and a baptistery was constructed (Fig. 4.3). This

33 For an overview of the churches of Stobi, see Snively (1979).

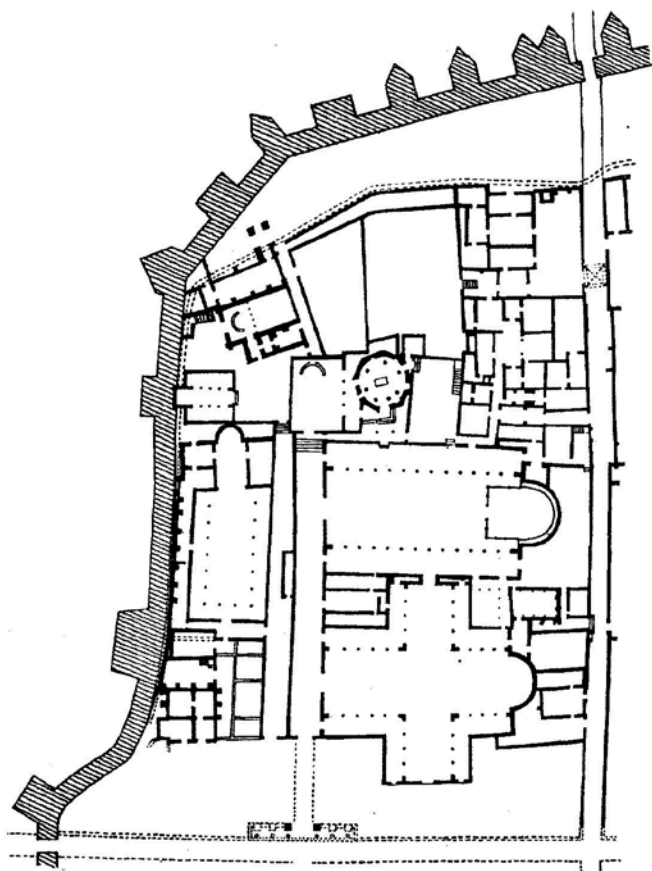


FIGURE 4.4 *Plan of the episcopal complex at Salona (Chevalier, Mardešić (2006) 61, fig. 8).*

complex dominated not only the episcopal complex located just to the north of the basilica, but also the adjacent ruins of the theatre, whose back wall was partly built over by the apse and the east wall of the south aisle.³⁴

Finally, also at Salona, the capital of the *provincia Dalmatia*, a large quantity of Christian buildings was constructed from the end of the fourth century onwards. The episcopal complex of this city was located in the northeast of the walled area (Fig. 4.4). The core of this ca. 30 000 m² large complex was

34 With atrium, northern annexes, baptistery and *catechumenium*, the complex measured 70 × 53 m. Wiseman, Mano-Zissi (1973–1974) 142–144; Wiseman (1978) 395–428; Snively (1979) 84–91, 95–181 for a complete description of the site and the stratigraphy; Wiseman (1978) 397–407 for the earlier church. See Mikulčić (2002) 426–432 for a summary of the dating evidence.

formed by a double church constructed at the end of the fourth or the early fifth century by the bishops Symferius and Hesychius.³⁵ The long vestibule at their western ends, which was a remodelling of a secondary *cardo*, became the pivot of the entire complex.³⁶ But it was especially the sixth century that was characterized by what has been called a 'une veritable fièvre bâtisseuse'.³⁷ In this period, the southern basilica was replaced by a cruciform church, a baptistery was added and the street entrance was embellished with a porch, among other changes. Even if the epigraphic record of Salona suffered greatly under later plundering, it is still possible to distinguish a large number of secular and especially episcopal donors.³⁸

Pilgrimage Sites

Theveste, located far inland in *Numidia* (Tebessa in modern Algeria), was the home of the martyr Crispina, whose fame spread far beyond the small town in which she died. Around AD 400, her burial site, located in a cemetery on the outskirts of the old Roman town, became the centre of a substantial pilgrimage complex.³⁹ The entire compound was some 190 by 90 m and was clearly distinguished from the areas around it by its own enclosure wall. It surrounded a large church of 46.50 m long and 22 m wide, which, together with its atrium, was located on top of a high podium. From the church, one could gain access to an additional trefoil chapel, the shrine of Crispina, located 3 m lower. The so-called 'Allee' separated the church from an additional area to the west. This area, 46 by 64 m, was divided into four sections, probably shallow pools, surrounded by low walls. The western side of the 'Allee', as well as the paths running between the pools, were flanked with pilasters. To the west, an additional porticoed building, identified as stables, was present.⁴⁰

The sanctuary of Abu Mina is located in the Libyan Desert, at ca. 46 km to the southwest of Alexandria, not far from Lake Maryût/Mareotis (Fig. 4.5).⁴¹ It was dedicated to Saint Menas, a Christian martyr, who died under the persecutions

35 Jeličić-Radonić (2007) 13, 15, fig. 2–3 and Gauthier, Marin, Prévôt (2010) 237–240 no. 63 for the inscription.

36 Chevalier, Mardešić (2006) 59–60; Chevalier, Mardešić (2008) 230–234 for a detailed description of the development of the cathedrals.

37 Chevalier, Mardešić (2006) 60; Chevalier, Mardešić (2008) 232.

38 *Ibid.*; Gauthier, Marin, Prévôt 2010 (31–33).

39 Christern (1976) 125–128; MacMullen (2009) 65. For an overview of the development of the town itself in the late antique period, see Sears (2007) 50–52.

40 Christern (1976) 94–96 for the west area; 90–94 for the stables; MacMullen (2009) 66–67.

41 Grossmann (1989); Grossmann (1991); Grossmann (1998a); Grossmann (1998b); Grossmann (2002) 210–214, 401–412.

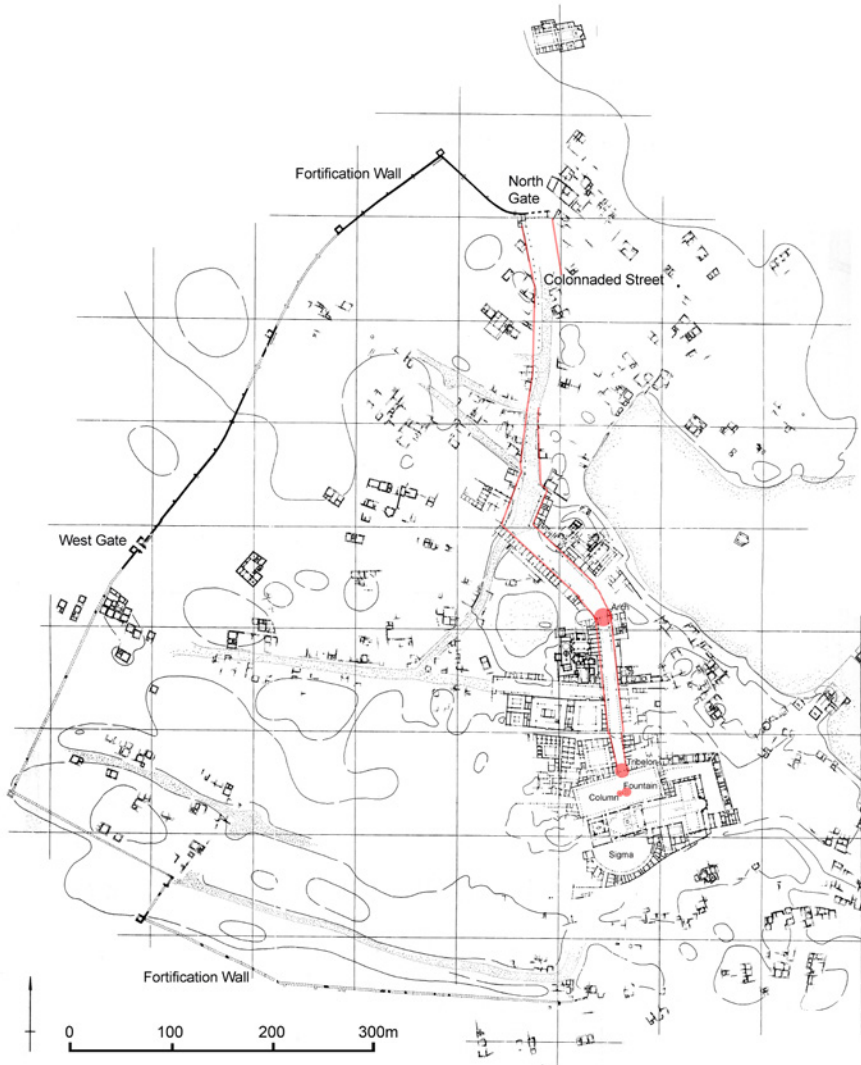


FIGURE 4.5 *Plan of the pilgrimage complex at Menas with indication of secular architectural prototypes.*

of Diocletian in Cotyaeum in Phrygia. In the late fourth century, a first church was constructed above the tomb or cenotaph of the saint. The small village around it would grow into a large pilgrimage centre only at the end of the fifth and especially in the course of the sixth century. The first church was integrated into a large tripartite complex which, next to the Church of the Martyr or the Basilica of the Crypt, was comprised of the Great Basilica and a baptistery,

surrounded by multiple courtyards and auxiliary structures. This ecclesiastical compound was separated from the remainder of the settlement by means of an enclosure wall, which did not serve a military, but only a symbolic function. The rest of the settlement was composed of houses, shops and workshops, but also of inns for pilgrims, bath complexes serving both inhabitants and visitors, as well as some additional churches, the so-called Northern Basilica and the Eastern Church, located at 700 m from the pilgrimage core.

Between AD 476 and 490, a huge pilgrimage complex measuring 350 by 150 m in total was erected in honour of Simeon Stylites (died in 459) at Qal'at Si'man (Syria). The saint's column, on which he had spent 27 years of his life, was encased in an octagon with basilicas on four sides. In addition, the complex included a monastery with an additional church, a necropolis for the monks, and 100 m to the south, a baptistery, another basilica, lodgings for pilgrims and a first entrance gate. As was the case at Theveste, this sanctuary was also completely surrounded by an enclosure. Moreover, it possessed an additional enclosed forecourt of 80 by 90 m, which had to be entered through another gate.⁴²

Resafa or Sergiopolis was, at least from the reign of Diocletian onwards, a modest *castrum* of the eastern *limes*, located outside the walls of the Early Byzantine fortifications. It developed in an exceptional manner after it became famous as the site of the martyrdom of St. Sergius. In the early fifth century AD, a first martyrion was constructed at the location of the later Basilica of the Cross. Resafa became the administrative and economic centre of the region. Eventually, its bishop was given the rank of metropolitan during the later reign of Anastasius. The grandiose fortification of the settlement was in all likelihood already partially executed during the reign of Anastasius (AD 491–518), even if Prokopios claimed that Justinian (527–565) was responsible. The Early Byzantine settlement possessed four churches in total:⁴³ next to the largest Basilica of the Cross (Basilica A) and two more basilical churches, a tetraconch church ('Zentralbau') was constructed in line with the view of the main gate of the settlement in the second quarter of the sixth century at the latest.⁴⁴

Alahan in western Cilicia (southeast Turkey) was a fifth century monastery of which the buildings were superbly decorated.⁴⁵ The major building period is thought to have begun around the middle of the century and to have ended

42 Christern (1976) 277–279; Krautheimer (1986) 143–151; Strube (1996) 63.

43 Fowden 1999 (67–92) for a summary of Resafa's history; Zanini (2003) 206–207.

44 Karnapp (1986). Jacobs (2012) 321 for the thought-through location of the building.

45 Gough (1968); Gough (1985) for a short description of the site; Bakker (1985) for the entire architectural description.

around AD 491.⁴⁶ The complex comprised two major basilicas located on top of a limestone terrace some 250 m above the fertile plain below, but also the Cave Complex, a complete monastery cut out of the rock comprising two additional churches, additional caves serving as living quarters of monks, among other things. The possible presence of a hospice as well as the baptistery situated in the centre of this terrace, between the two churches, leads us to suspect that this complex also functioned as a regional pilgrimage centre.⁴⁷ The large and sumptuously decorated Basilica could accommodate small crowds, whereas the Cave Church and the slightly younger East Church on the eastern end of the limestone terrace would have served the monastic community.⁴⁸

But even if its excellent state of preservation has made Alahan famous today, the largest pilgrimage site in the region was that of Seleukeia (modern Meryemlik), dedicated to the patron saint of Rough Cilicia, Saint Tecla, who spent her last day on earth there and supposedly vanished alive into the ground thereafter.⁴⁹ Pilgrims were attracted by the site due to its reputation for miraculous medical cures. By the late fourth century when Egeria visited the site, there was already a substantial community present, living around the fourth century Basilica of Saint Tecla comprised of her martyrion, with several gardens and cells, all enclosed by a temenos wall, which here apparently served not only a symbolic, but also a defensive function.⁵⁰ The basilica was replaced in the later fifth century by a gigantic church of 81 by 43 m. The emperor Zeno is known to have constructed another church on this site in the last quarter of the fifth century, which can in all likelihood be identified with the Cupola Church (78 by 35 metres) to the north of the martyrion.⁵¹ The other churches on site, including the North Church and a church northwest of the Cupola Church are not well known.

46 Harrison (1985) 32–34.

47 Gough (1981) 461; Hill (1996) 8. For the hospice, see Gough (1981) 456; Gough (1985) 13–14; Harrison (1985) 22–23; Sheehan (1985) 208, 217.

48 Sheehan (1985) for the organization of the monastery and the possible separation between the more public areas and the monastic community.

49 Basil, *Vita* 28, 7–11. Hill (1996) 208–212. *Ibid.*, 208–234 for all information on the site and its separate churches.

50 Hill (1996) 208 with a quotation of the relevant passage (*Peregrinatio* 23, 2–6).

51 Hill (1996) 212 summarizes the discussion on which church should be identified as donated by the emperor. It is possible that he was involved in the reconstruction of several buildings, also including the Basilica of Tecla, see Hill (1996) 213–214.

Architectural Features

Colonnaded Streets

Within the classical Roman city, the main thoroughfares took the form of colonnaded streets. They led a large amount of passers-by to their destination and interconnected all major monuments. Besides the paved street surface, a colonnaded street was comprised of a continuous or discontinuous colonnade and a row of shops at the back. The entablatures of the colonnades carried a wood-and-tile roof sloping towards the street. These colonnaded streets were highly appreciated already in Roman times. Especially the regularity and unity introduced by continuous rows of columns received the highest praise both in Antiquity and in the present day.⁵² Such monumental avenues could, moreover, be used for a variety of functions. First of all, they guided visitors through the city and formed a backdrop well suited for public manifestations. Secondly, in addition to offering passage, the colonnades provided shelter against weather conditions. Thirdly, commerce was very present in the form of shops located behind the colonnades.⁵³ And finally, although they were architecturally less expressed, there were no doubt various social activities taking place underneath the portico roofs.⁵⁴

In Late Roman times, the popularity of colonnaded streets augmented even further. Following the example of its predecessors in the third century, the new imperial capital of Constantinople was supplied with several colonnaded thoroughfares,⁵⁵ and over the last century, a great number of late antique colonnaded streets have been discovered and excavated all over the eastern Mediterranean,⁵⁶ They remained an integral part of the urban armature in

52 Gros (1996) 95; Brilliant (1974) 66–67; Lyttelton (1974) 215; MacDonald (1986) 32–33; Bejor (1999) 7 for colonnades as powerful urbanistic tools. One of the most eloquent modern sources praising the unity of colonnaded streets is Segal (1997) 9–10. The long perspectives offered by colonnades also exalted admiration in literary sources, see for example Ach. Tat. 5.1–5 (second century AD) on Alexandria and *Or. Sibyll.* 13. 64–68 (AD 253) for the colonnades of Bosra and Philippopolis.

53 See also Lib., *Or.* 11.254; 267, who clearly testifies to this function.

54 Saradi (2006) 266–267 for a summary on social activities; for processions see Segal (1997) 10, 47; Saradi (2006) 271.

55 Crawford (1990) 108; Mundell Mango (2001). The Mese was most likely already laid out under Septimius Severus, see Bejor (1999) 93–94.

56 For an overview of these late antique colonnaded streets, see Jacobs (2012) 115–117.



FIGURE 4.6 *Theveste, photograph (courtesy of Lea Stirling).*

imperialy founded cities far into the sixth century AD, with examples at Resafa and Zenobia in Syria, and Justiniana Prima in Serbia.⁵⁷

The theme of the colonnaded approach itself was copied into church complexes from the early fifth century onwards at the latest. Naturally, they only occur within larger episcopal complexes and pilgrimage centres.⁵⁸ One of the earliest examples can be found in the sanctuary of Theveste. Although the appearance of the road between the gate of the city and the sanctuary itself is unknown, the 8 m wide and 86 m long route through the complex was colonnaded, at least along one side. The columns stood far apart and were topped by arches (Fig. 4.6).⁵⁹

57 See Zanini (2007) 202–212; Jacobs (2012) 115 in general; Fowden (1999) 78 with further bibliography for Resafa; Duval (1996) 326–327 for Justinian Prima.

58 In addition, there are indications that the presence of churches altered the urban infrastructure itself by inducing the construction of full-fledged colonnaded streets. This is discussed in Jacobs (2014).

59 Christern (1976) 43–44, 225.

Likewise, at Djemila, a more complete colonnaded avenue connected the entrance of the Christian quarter to the basilicas and the baptistery.⁶⁰ The avenue was also 8 m wide but only 25 m long and therefore substantially less impressive than the already existing streets of the town. The transition between the main street of the settlement and this avenue was over a wider colonnaded section of 15.50 m, with an apsed-shaped gate at the back, leaving a passage of only 2.75 m. In the colonnaded avenue that was added in the course of the sixth century to provide access to the cathedral church at Philippi, the transition between the secular street network and the ecclesiastical domain occurred at the back of the avenue, whereas one could enter the avenue itself relatively freely by descending a few steps from the decumanus. As such, this *via porticata* can be considered a side branch of the city's street network.⁶¹ Finally, the main entrance into the episcopal complex of Stobi was also through a colonnaded passage.⁶²

On the one hand, these avenues can indeed be considered new additions to the existing urban armature of the settlement. They possessed roughly the same form as the older colonnaded streets—with the notable exception that there were no shops located behind their colonnades—and they shared the important function of guiding large amounts of visitors to a major public monument. On the other hand, both at Theveste and at Djemila, gates or gate-like structures also clearly signalized the transition from secular to sacred space. The situation is not so well known at Philippi. It is possible that the avenue could have been closed off at the staircase near the decumanus itself. Otherwise, the transition occurred at the end of the avenue. Moreover, as said, typical for such avenues and in complete opposition to the mass of secular colonnaded streets, was that they did not possess shops behind their colonnades. As such, they have more in common with a few imperial colonnaded avenues constructed between the 240's and the end of the third century. The two main colonnaded streets of Philippopolis, the colonnaded streets that structured Diocletian's imperial palace at Split and the sections of the Via Egnatia connecting the Mausoleum of Galerius with the imperial palace at Thessalonica all possessed porticoes but no shops.⁶³ It was not coincidental that they could all be identified as imperial projects ordered by Philip the Arab, Diocletian and Galerius, respectively. They were above all intended to be representational, whereas commercial interests were non-existent. This was even more the

60 Christern (1976) 137.

61 Brenk (2003) 8–9.

62 Wiseman (1978) 427.

63 The three sites were described in Bejor (1999) 98–102.

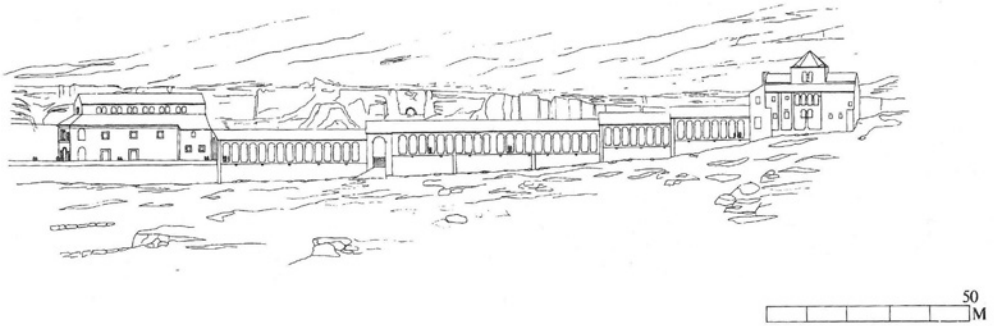


FIGURE 4.7 *Reconstruction of the colonnaded walkway at Alahan (Gough (1985) 185, fig. 55).*

case at Philippopolis and Split, where the colonnaded avenues were part of the imperial residence. Likewise, the ecclesiastical authorities strove to create impressive entrances to their seats of power that would impress their churchgoers and provided a backdrop well suited for processions.

Finally, although these examples are all closely related to pre-existing settlements, this architectural vocabulary was also included in more isolated Christian sanctuaries. As such, in the late fifth century the churches of the complex at Alahan in Isauria were connected through a 130 m long ambulatory bordered by Corinthian columns carrying arcades along the side of the valley, the eaves of the mono-pitched roof starting at a height of ca. 5.50 m (Fig. 4.7).⁶⁴ The solid north wall of this walkway closed off the more private areas of the monastery from the more public 'Two-Storey Building'—the possible hospice—the baptistery and the necropolis.⁶⁵ This walkway could be entered from the west through a gate.⁶⁶

Exedrae and Semi-Circular Plazas

As mentioned above, the entrance separating the porticoed avenue of Djemila from the main street took the form of an apse-shaped gate. The bishop's complex at Philippi could already be entered from the south through a small exedra from the mid-fifth century onwards and Basilica A was also accessed from a semi-circular portal from the late fifth century onwards.⁶⁷ Even one of the two

64 Bakker (1985) 120–124; Gough (1985) 13.

65 Bakker (1985) 121; Sheehan (1985) 205.

66 Bakker (1985) 121.

67 Brenk (2003) 9. See also Müller-Wiener (1987) 121, 124.

entrances into the narthex of the modest Basilica at Mytikas (Central Greece) was a small exedra.⁶⁸

Such structures, which originated in Hellenistic defensive architecture,⁶⁹ held the advantage of architecturally embracing visitors and directing them to a central point in the centre of the semicircle. The point of entrance functioned as a funnel and was thus easily controllable, but the façade always appeared welcoming and could even be further elaborated with niches and columns. This mechanism was applied quite often in private architecture of Late Antiquity. Well-known examples include the entrance to Piazza Armerina and the further developed plans of the early fifth century palace of Antiochus at Constantinople, as well as the so-called Palace of Lausos. Similar sigmas were present in the Hagiasma of the Hodegetria and the niche building near the Myrelaion.⁷⁰

These palaces have a very close parallel to an ecclesiastic building in Carthage. The Justinianic Rotunda at the Damos-el-Karita site was preceded by a similar semi-circular courtyard (Fig. 4.2). This served as a monumental vestibule directly accessible from the road leading from Carthage to Megara. In this it resembled the plaza in front of the Palace of Lausos that could be entered from the road to the north of the Hippodrome, with the difference that the Rotunda plaza appears to have been separated from the *cardo* by at least a terrace wall. The walking level on the other side was located nearly a meter lower so that the sigma could only be entered over a staircase.⁷¹ The sigma-plaza itself, which possessed a total diameter of some 24.6 m, consisted of a semi-circular portico surrounding a courtyard.⁷² There was another height

68 Laskaris (2000) fig. 56a.

69 Examples entail the Hellenistic main gate of Side (Pamphylia), see McNicoll (1997) 147; Gros (1996) 52–53. But later fortification walls also integrated similar gates. For instance, the east, south and west gate of Tipasa, the Portes des Gaules at Fréjus, the main gate of the Diocletian fortress ‘in der Harlach’ and the east gate of Justiniana Prima were shaped as such.

70 See Dolenz (2001) 64 for further references. On the sigma as building form, see Müller-Wiener (1987).

71 Dolenz (2001) 51. In a second phase, dated to the end of the sixth or early seventh century AD, the height differences appear to have disappeared. The height difference between the courtyard and the portico was eliminated, as the height of the latter was elevated by 1.5 m, so that the whole possessed the appearance of an atrium. Also the walking level outside the building appears to have been at the same height, see Dolenz (2001) 58.

72 Columns were present every 4.8 m. The central area was probably paved with flagstones, of which the underlying mortar is still in situ, see Dolenz (2001) 54.

difference of 1.3 m between the portico and courtyard, which needed to be bridged by a staircase. The courtyard gave access to a centrally planned structure. Strangely enough, also in this the complex paralleled the private mansions at Constantinople, in all of which the central entry at the back of the exedra gave access to a centrally planned space.⁷³ Finally, an additional benefit of this eye-catching reception area was that it hid the slightly divergent orientations of the road and the sanctuary.

Although this seems to be an exceptional example of rendering architectural forms in ecclesiastical construction,⁷⁴ the motif of the semi-circular courtyard itself was not unknown on the site of Damous-el-Karita. The main basilica was already preceded by a sigma-shaped plaza by the end of the fourth century, whereby the focus of attention in this case was not the entrance to the church but the trefoil chapel and, no doubt, the important tombs located within.⁷⁵ The fact that this plaza was apparently given a luxurious portico, consisting of black marble, spirally fluted columns and with a back wall decorated with pilasters,⁷⁶ likewise indicates the importance of the cult of the death taking place also outside the prayer hall.⁷⁷

Such semi-circular courtyards appeared in many more churches. In Carthage itself, the *Basilica Maiorum*, the oldest cemetery basilica, already from the early fourth century onwards had an atrium with an exedra possessing a diameter of 20 m added inside the old burial *area*, in front of the prayer hall. This created a reception area in front of the entrance of the church, which was not necessarily fully employed by church visitors.⁷⁸ In contrast, in all following examples,

73 It is worth noting that the Palace of Antiochos was converted into a church, the Euphemia-Church, probably when relics of the saint were transferred to Constantinople from Chalcedon in 680, see Bardill (1997).

74 Carthage housed even more extraordinary church buildings. Worth mentioning for its architectural originality is also the pilgrimage complex at Bir Ftouha, datable to the 540's, see Stevens (2005) 545. The complex possessed a remarkably unified plan and a strong axial symmetry. An innovative enneagon functioned as a vestibule, and behind the ambulatory of the basilica two little peristyle courtyards in the form of curvilinear crosses were constructed. Both courtyards were decorated with intricate mosaic floors, adapted to these peculiar shapes. They possessed colourful marble columns in a white-veined black marble and probably ceiling mosaics with glass and gilded glass tesserae, see Stevens (2005) 537, 541, 566–567, 556, colour fig. 12.4.

75 Dolenz (2001) 63.

76 Ennabli (1997) 123.

77 See MacMullen (2009) 53–65 for 'memorial worship' in and around cemetery churches in North Africa.

78 Ennabli (1997) 133–134.

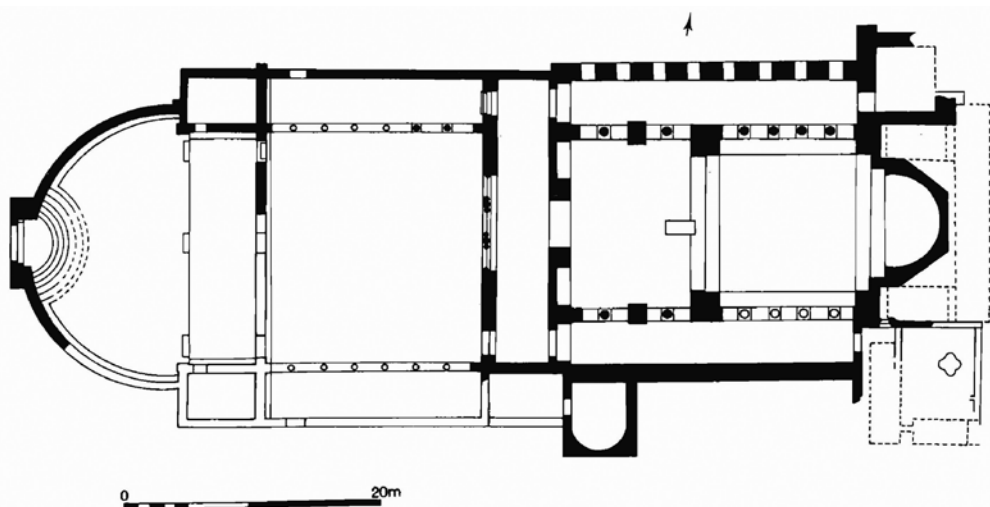


FIGURE 4.8 Plan of the Cupola Church at Meryemlik (Hill (1996) fig. 44).

the semi-circular courtyard was an integral and functional part of the entrance event. Firstly, in order to reach the three-aisled Basilica A at Thebes, one had to pass through the atrium, which this time was given a rounded western portico.⁷⁹ Secondly, at the end of the fifth century, some churches in Cilicia were adorned with a full-fledged semi-circular forecourt. As they have often only been surveyed, data is here scantier. There are three churches with such a feature, including the ‘Cupola Church’ at the pilgrimage site of Meryemlik;⁸⁰ but also the ‘Domed Ambulatory Church’ at Dağ Pazarı, a site comprising at least four churches, possibly to be identified with the ancient city of Coropissus or Dalisandus;⁸¹ and the North Church as Öküzlü, which actually had a polygonal forecourt.⁸² Regrettably, only that at Meryemlik is somewhat better known. At the west end of the complex a semi-circular forecourt preceded the actual atrium of the church. This western courtyard appears to have had one single, wide entrance on its main axis, behind which a flight of curved steps led down-

79 The room on the north side was a baptistery and that in the south has been identified as a sacristy. The complex was surrounded by a strong enclosure wall on its north, east and south side. A small entrance led to auxiliary rooms in the east, see Karagiorgou (2001b) 187.

80 Hill (1996) 227–228.

81 Hill (1996) 149–150 for a discussion on the possible identifications.

82 Hill (1996) 15, 54, 155–160 for the Domed Ambulatory Church at Dağ Pazarı; *ibid.* 54, 237 for Öküzlü.

wards into the paved area. There was a bench around the outer wall, offering a moment of rest to pilgrims. The east side of the courtyard was occupied by a building which seems to have had the character of a propylaeum, open on the west side, but closed to the east by a wall with three door openings leading into the atrium proper.⁸³ Finally, the courtyard abutting the narthex of the massive basilica at Lechaion was also semi-circular at the west end.⁸⁴

All these semi-circular atria have a straight side that abuts the actual church building in common. Such entrances are very close to the way that some major pagan sanctuaries had once been approached.⁸⁵ In contrast with the previous sigma plazas, visitors would enter here from the street through a narrow gate and could thereafter spread out over the atrium. The intention here was thus to guide large numbers of visitors along a predefined route in an orderly way. At Thebes, they would be steered round the fountain abutting the east side of the atrium, either towards the south and north entrance into the narthex, or to the baptistery to the north and the sacristy to the south of the atrium itself. Likewise, the porticoes of the courtyard at Lechaion efficiently divided the congregation between the two lateral doors in the narthex and into the side aisles of the church. Thereafter, the bishop and the clergy would enter through the central door into the nave, which was segregated from the aisles.⁸⁶ In contrast, the complexes creating a funnel effect mentioned above are much more suited to assembling a smaller amount of visitors and making them feel special or 'chosen' after having entered through the narrow portal. It is therefore not surprising to find that this solution was more popular for the more intimate experience of visiting a martyr's shrine (or the reception hall of an aristocrat), and that the second solution was applied more often in basilicas, especially in large pilgrimage sanctuaries.

Finally, semi-circular plazas are of course also known as full-fledged components in the urban framework, as extensions of the colonnaded or porticoed streets running through a city. The primary function of most of them appears to have been commercial, as almost all of them were backed by small

83 Hill (1996) 227–228.

84 Sanders (2005) 437–439.

85 Semicircular porticoes are part of temples for African gods from the High Empire, among which are the podium temple for Iuno Caelestis in Dougga and the so-called Baalit-temple in Thurburbo Maius. For further details and figures, see Dolenz (2001) 63. The sanctuary at Heliopolis/Baalbek also incorporated a semicircular entrance, see Ball (2000) 302, whereas the Sebasteion at Antioch in Pisidia was located inside a wide colonnaded plaza, commonly known today as the *Augusta Platea*, complete with porticoes and back rooms, see Rubin (2008) 45.

86 Sanders (2005) 440–441; Caraher (2011) 13.

rooms, offices or shops.⁸⁷ There is one archaeologically attested case of such a sigma-plaza being directly connected to ecclesiastical architecture, located at Stobi (fig. 4.3). The city received new porticoes along its main street in the late fourth or fifth century AD. Halfway along its course, this so-called Via Sacra opened onto a semi-circular square, consisting of 10 or 11 shops and/or offices fronted by a portico.⁸⁸ Admittedly, the plaza predates the major mid-fifth century reconstruction phase of the episcopal complex, but the way the new triangular atrium—which in shape and function is close to the semi-circular plazas described above—was aligned to it,⁸⁹ clarifies that it was conceptually incorporated into the church compound. Considering the smaller size of the atrium of the cathedral church, it is not hard to imagine that the square came to function as an assembly place for the faithful. In addition, the southern colonnade of the passage through which the centre of the episcopal residential complex could be entered incorporated another semi-circular area.⁹⁰ At least in plan, this arrangement mimics that of the Via Sacra and the sigma. Therefore, it can be stated that the episcopal complex both expanded into secular space and adapted elements belonging to the secular landscape for its needs.⁹¹

Nymphaea

Both their decorative façades and the cooling effect of flowing water caused fountains to have an extremely pleasing effect on the hot and crowded cities of the eastern Mediterranean both during the Roman and the Late Roman period. Wayfarers could enjoy the view, drink the water, rest on the railings and

87 With the exception of Ostia. Although there are some earlier examples, such as the plaza created by Hadrian behind the north gate of Jerusalem, the semicircular plaza became truly popular only in Late Antiquity. A lot has already been written on this subject. See Müller-Wiener (1987) for an overview of the building form.

88 The plaza possesses a diameter of 27 m and is bordered by 10 columns. In the centre of the plaza, the base of a large monument is partly preserved, see Mikulčič (2002) 99; Sodini (2007) 322–323.

89 The irregular, almost triangular form of this end of the basilica where the atrium was located was apparently the result of construction within space already clearly defined, chiefly by the street itself, see Wiseman, Mano-Zissi (1971) 398.

90 Wiseman (1978) 427.

91 Although this is the only example excavated, there are two additional examples depicted on the Madaba Map. Both on the pictogram of the city of Kerak and on that of Lod (Lydea, Diospolis), the church is preceded or enveloped by a full-fledged semicircular plaza: at Kerak it appears to be in front of the city's main church, and at Lod the colonnade curves around the Church of St. George. In both cases, the courtyards may be remnants of an earlier temple standing on these sites, see Donner (1992) 40, 54–55; Ball (2000) 302.

steps and relax for a moment or two before moving on.⁹² Water is also known to have played an important role in Christian ritual and partially for this reason became an important element in Christian architecture. Water, preferably running water, was first and foremost required for the rituals taking place in church baptisteries. In addition, it was considered desirable to appear before God washed and clean.⁹³ Literary sources mention fountains being present in the atria of all important churches, including St. Peter's at Rome⁹⁴ and Hagia Sophia at Constantinople.⁹⁵ Literary attestations also exist for smaller churches, such as Laodikeia in Lycaonia.⁹⁶ Virtually all churches mentioned in this article integrated a water feature. Their shapes, however, were divergent, including modest *kantharoi* and basins, but also full-fledged fountains.

Indeed, at times the aesthetical quality of water in churches also led to magnificent fountain displays. For instance, the centre of the sigma-shaped atrium in front of the Lechaion basilica included a monumental water basin of some 9 m long and 3 m wide.⁹⁷ In addition, flanking the entrance to the hemicycle from the outer, rectangular atrium, were apparently two smaller basins.⁹⁸ Similarly, a fountain also occupied the entire eastern wall of the

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- 92 The appearance and function of public fountains in Late Antiquity has been elaborately discussed in Jacobs, Richard (2012).
- 93 For instance, Chrysostom referred to the washing of hands and/or feet before entering the church and praying in diverse passages, for example, "It is customary that there are fountains in the courtyards of houses of prayer, so that those who are going to pray to God and first wash their hands, lift them up to pray in this way." (J. Chrys., *Hom.* 1–3, PG 51.300.34–43; transl. in Van Den Hoek and Herrmann (2000) 166).
- 94 In AD 396, Paulinus of Nola included the following lines in his description of the courtyard of Saint Peter's in Rome, "There is a bright atrium, where a cupola with solid brass adorns and shades a *cantharus*, which belches forth streams of water serving our hands and faces..." after which he elaborates on the symbolic meaning of water. Paulin. Nol., *Ep.* 13.13; transl. in Van Den Hoek, Herrmann (2000) 174–175. This article, though it mainly focuses on terminology, also assembles a large collection of sources pertaining to the presence of water features in atria attested to in literary sources. For water features in church atria in late antique Italy, see Ward-Perkins (1984) 141–142.
- 95 "A very wide *phiale* stands in the precious centre of the long courtyard, a block cut of the best lassis, where a stream of splashing water jumps up in the air to send a squirt, which springs up with force from a bronze pipe, a squirt that drives away all sufferings when people in the gold-robed month at the time of the feast of God's initiation draw for themselves undefiled water in nightly vessels." (Paul the Silentary, *Decriptio sanctae Sophiae* 594–600, transl. in Van Den Hoek, Herrmann (2000) 189).
- 96 Epitaph of Bishop Eugenius, ca. 330, see Mango (1972) 14.
- 97 Krautheimer (1986) 133.
- 98 Krautheimer (1986) fig. 88.

atrium of Basilia B at Nicopolis, thus forming a highly attractive façade for all those entering the courtyard.⁹⁹ Conversely, at Basilica A at Philippi, it was the wall opposite the entrances to the prayer hall that was shaped after the example of a *nymphaeum*.¹⁰⁰ At the Martyrion of St. Philip at Hierapolis, constructed around the year 400, a small shrine-like fountain was positioned in the prolongation of the processional way and the closing of its northern vista, where pilgrims were forced to turn north and ascend a large flight of steps leading up to the terrace upon which the church was located. Today, the fountain is a tower-like feature constructed with large travertine blocks, with a small niche covered by a marble conch at the bottom. It may have once been covered with a layer of painted plaster or marble veneer, but its decoration has largely disappeared.¹⁰¹ In addition, although the Martyrion did not possess a central entrance court, the four entrance halls in the centre of each side took over not only the functions of an atrium, but also its water features. Their sidewalls were thus provided with niches accentuated by small columns and surmounted by marble cornices. Inside each niche, a fountain was installed.¹⁰²

Although in each of these complexes the water no doubt served a functional purpose, the size, decoration and multiplication of water features indicates that the pleasing effects of flowing water were well understood and happily integrated also within ecclesiastical complexes.

Arches

In the Roman period, arches appeared astride major thoroughfares outside and inside the enclosed area and across their intersections.¹⁰³ Traffic passed through either one, exceptionally two, or three openings, which were flanked on both sides by engaged or freestanding orders that carried an entablature directly over the arch crown. In Syria, Arabia and North Africa, arches closely resembling the Italo-Roman 'triumphal arch' occurred,¹⁰⁴ but in Asia Minor columnar arches and propylaea in the Greek tradition appeared.¹⁰⁵ In the

99 Bowden (2003) 123.

100 Brenk (2003) 9–10.

101 Arthur (2006) 155. The identification of the structure as a water-feature is based on the hole in its back wall and its coverage by a conch, recurrent in small fountains. Alternatively, it may have been a shrine similar to the one inserted into the colonnaded walkway of the monastery of Alahan, see Bakker (1985) 125–126, fig. 57 and pl. 60.

102 Arthur (2006) 156.

103 MacDonald (1986) 80.

104 Arches carrying an 'attica', a monumental socle-base above the arch which supported a representation of the person to whom it was erected, see Gros (1996) 56–74.

105 Waelkens (2002) 335, 341.



FIGURE 4.9 *The tower-like fountain at Hierapolis.*

fourth and fifth centuries AD, many of the arches that had been erected outside the city centre, to mark city boundaries, were incorporated into newly erected city walls.¹⁰⁶ Consequently, by the time that the great Christian pilgrimage complexes were established, which were often in need of a (defensive) enclosure and a suitable entrance, this had become a common configuration.

As mentioned above, the sanctuary of Theveste was surrounded by an enclosure wall. There were only two entrances, of which the southern one was by far the most important. With its two sets of pedestals and freestanding columns in front of wall pilasters, its arched opening and (reconstructed) high attic storey, the south gate strongly resembled an Italo-Roman triumphal arch (Fig. 4.6). In particular, it showed many similarities to the local tetrapylon standing at the crossing of the Decumanus Maximus and the *cardo* of Theveste, which visitors to the sanctuary would have already passed on their way to the pilgrimage centre.¹⁰⁷ This tetrapylon, which has been dated to the reign of Caracalla and was restored in AD 361, was very likely the direct source of inspiration when the designers of the sanctuary wanted to provide the complex with an appropriate entrance a few decades later. Through the combination of porticoes and a traditional arch, the avenue running through the sanctuary was thus an imitation of the grand entrances into civic centres from the Roman and also Late Roman period. It can even be called a *via triumphalis*¹⁰⁸ as it was very broad, flanked by colonnades, but not accessible to wheeled traffic and also not backed by shops, so it was purely decorative. So, even though this sanctuary was located at some distance from the town centre of Theveste, clearly distinguished from the old, secular core, it actually repeats standard architectural components of a traditional Roman town without much variation.

Similar monuments occurred at the entrances of other Christian sanctuaries. Pilgrims travelling to the sanctuary of Symeon Stylites at Qal'at Sim'an had to pass underneath a decorative arch twice.¹⁰⁹ Likewise, when Sergiopolis was given new walls in the later reign of Anastasius, continuing under Justinian, its main gate copied all the characteristics of an honorific arch (Fig. 4.10). In addition to the functional rectangular passages, prominent arcades were integrated

106 Jacobs (2009) 199–200; Jacobs (2012) 67–69.

107 Both of them possessed two pairs of columns to mark the passage and they had almost identical dimensions. The tetrapylon in the centre would also eventually be transformed into a city entrance when the Early Byzantine walls were constructed shortly after AD 530, see Christern (1976) 20–23. From that moment onwards, this entrance to the city and the entrance to the ecclesiastical complex would have been almost identical.

108 Christern (1976) 245–246.

109 Strube (1996) 69, 65 fig. 113.



FIGURE 4.10 *The West Gate of Sergiopolis/Resafa.*

higher up on the wall surface. The opulence found in the fortifications of this settlement is not equalled in similar, nearly contemporaneous and comparable settlements such as Zenobia and can only be explained by Resafa's role as an important ecclesiastical centre. It is worth noting that also here a colonnaded street took off in the direction of the churches of the town.

The traditional arch has been associated with honour and triumph since the Roman republic. Arches were set up at local, civic initiatives or by local benefactors for several reasons, usually to honour a person or an event connected to the particular history of the city such as its foundation or the representation of its titular deities and protectors.¹¹⁰ They could further refer to a military victory or the visit of an emperor, which would upgrade the juridical status of the city in certain cases. Individuals for whom an arch was erected included emperors or an imperial dynasty, generals, leading citizens or benefactors who had paid for a certain monument or part of the city's infrastructure. The idea of Christianity as the triumphant religion could therefore find expression in this particular architectural form. None of these arches carried inscriptions as their predecessors had, which can be explained by the fact that

110 For an elaborate overview of the reasons for their construction, see Roehmer (1997).

the particular reasons to erect these arches had been replaced by the overall idea of Christianity as the triumphant religion and God as the supreme ruler. This statement was probably very recognisable when wearied travellers arrived at the sanctuary gates.

Tetrapyla

Finally, the last traditional secular element of architecture taken up by the Church was the tetrapylon, a columnar monument consisting of four identical bases placed at a regular interdistance, carrying four or at the most sixteen identical columns. In Roman civic contexts tetrapyla were most often positioned at the intersection of two main streets¹¹¹ or, occasionally, they were used as propylaea for sanctuaries, such as at the Temple of Aphrodite at Aphrodisias or at Rhodes.¹¹² In both cases, they indicated vital points in a city's landscape.¹¹³ This tradition of tetrapyla also continued in Late Antiquity, mainly in the Near East, Egypt and Constantinople.¹¹⁴ Their appearance in ecclesiastical contexts probably started in the course of the fifth century, but reached a peak in the sixth century. As in the Roman temple domains, they were also used here to indicate entrances, to the ecclesiastical compound as a whole and to a certain part of it, among others.

The oldest ecclesiastical tetrapylon is probably that at Apamea. Here, a very traditional columnar monument was implanted at the crossing of the southern decumanus and, surprising at first sight, a secondary cardo near the cathedral complex.¹¹⁵ Judging by its position, it is very likely that this tetrapylon was connected to the first phase of the cathedral complex and was intended to mark the otherwise discreet route to its northwest entrance.¹¹⁶ The indirect man-

111 They could be joined by the street colonnades, but could also, just like tetrakionia and tetrastyla, be located in the centre of a larger oval or round plaza, see MacDonald (1986) 87; Mundell Mango (2001) 39. Oval and round plazas appeared from the second century onwards, see Lyttleton (1974) 227–228.

112 Jacobs (2012) 211 for Aphrodisias. At Rhodes the monument was located at the end of a street, at the beginning of two transversal staircases, see Gros (1996) 89; Bejor (1999) 43.

113 Browning (1982) 84, 138; MacDonald (1986) 91–92; Segal (1997) 148.

114 Segal (1997) 141–149 and Thiel (2002) 301–318 for examples from the Near East; Segal (1997) 140 note 143; Grossmann (2003) 128 and Thiel (2006) for Egypt; Jordan-Ruwe (1985) 195, 209 for the appearance of tetrapyla on the imperial fora of the capital.

115 Balty (2000) 235.

116 Jacobs (2012) 370. The location of the famous Justinianic tetrastylon on the Arkadiane at Ephesos was presumably dictated by the colonnaded street leading to the Church of St. Mary in the former Olympieion, see Jacobs (2012) 234. The influence of church buildings on the wider secular armature is discussed in Jacobs (2014).

ner of access was remedied only in the sixth century phase of the complex, when it was provided with a monumental propylon directly on the southern decumanus.

As mentioned above, the episcopal complex of Salona was undergoing multiple changes in the course of the sixth century AD. The apparent intention was to make the complex more magnificent and more impressive than before. One of the alterations was the embellishment of the entrance from the decumanus maximus with a porch-like structure, as was the case at Apamea. Moreover, the *cardo* leading from the decumanus to the Porta Andetria received further embellishment in the form of what has been called a 'porche tétrastyle', but what looks to be a tetrapylon from the plans (Fig. 4.3). Originally, it was thought that it indicated the entrance to the episcopal palace, but it now rather seems that the buildings here were intended for storage and in any case had an economical function. The episcopal palace is located to the west of the central *cardo*, where, according to new interpretations, the large hall represents the audience hall of the bishop and where there was also a private *balneum* located to the south of this hall.¹¹⁷ The reasons to locate this tétrastyle monument here therefore remain obscure. It has been suggested that its creation was a defensive measure, but this is not further argued.¹¹⁸ The capitals and a lintel of the monument in any case carried the monogram of the initiator, archbishop Petrus IV, who held office from AD 554 to AD 562.¹¹⁹

In addition, the form of the tetrapylon is also used more than once in order to elaborate the entrances of church buildings. For instance, the propyla of the Tetraconch at Resafa took the shape of two tétrastyla—four single pillars—though no longer identical in size and shape and no longer placed at cross-roads, but instead above the entrance to a smaller side street and alongside the main road.¹²⁰ The western forecourt of the late fifth century sanctuary at Campanopétrā at Salamis (Cyprus) was also entered from a street ca. 5 m wide. The presence of openings in the church wall was indicated by two tetrapyla.¹²¹ As these structures also gave access to a large building further west, probably

117 Chevalier, Mardešić (2008) 232–234.

118 *Ibid.* 233.

119 *Ibid.* 232–233; for the inscriptions themselves, see Gauthier, Marin, Prévôt (2010) no. 24–25, 37–39.

120 Karnapp (1986) 129–131.

121 Roux (1998) 18, 28–29. The superstructure of these tetrapyla is not preserved, but they probably took the form of two small *quadrifons* with either a horizontal or a sloping roof.

a luxurious residence of the local governor or the bishop,¹²² they imitated the function of a traditional tetrapylon as signaler of a crossroad.

Interestingly, like arches, tetrapyla have also been connected to ideas of power in the past. W. Thiel even considered them typical imperial monuments, demonstrating supreme rule.¹²³ Therefore, the decision to integrate tetrapyla into ecclesiastical contexts may have been instigated by these associations, besides them being highly decorative and impressive monuments.

Accumulating Secular Representative Elements

To conclude this overview, I would like to stress that many of the abovementioned complexes often combined two or more different complexes within their compounds. All of them were eventually used in one of the largest pilgrimage centres of the Early Christian world at the sanctuary of Menas in Egypt (Fig. 4.5). Additions and adornment started at the core, within the ecclesiastical compound itself, and slowly spread out over the surrounding settlement, especially in northern direction. As a consequence, by the end of the sixth or maybe only in the early seventh century, the entire site was surrounded by a fortification wall,¹²⁴ the main gate of which was a fairly traditional arch, comprised of three passages. The largest central passageway was decorated with half columns, the lateral openings with pilasters.¹²⁵ Pilgrims would then enter the main street that was flanked by columns positioned on top of high pedestals.¹²⁶ When nearing the ecclesiastical centre, the imminent transition from secular to Christian was stressed by various mechanisms: first, pilgrims passed underneath another arch; subsequently, in contrast to the more northern, winding sections, the last street stretch continued in a straight line towards the centre; it then became narrower and no longer possessed columns so that a funnel effect was created; eventually, after being driven through the narrow bottleneck at the end of the road, the pilgrims would enter a spacious peristyle

¹²² Roux (1998) 29.

¹²³ He connects them to the Tetrarchic period, which is not entirely correct as they were also constructed in other ages, be it in smaller numbers, see Thiel (2002) 321–324. Segal (1997) 140, in contrast, considers tetrapyla purely decorative monuments.

¹²⁴ Remains have been found in the northern and western parts of the settlement, but are absent in the east, and it is possible that they were never completed, see Grossmann (1991) 460–468; Grossmann (1995) 393–397.

¹²⁵ Grossmann (1991) 467. There was another gate in the western section of the wall. This was purely functional and its appearance drastically differed from that of the North Gate: it possessed only one narrow passage flanked by two square towers, see Grossmann (1991) 460–468; Grossmann (1995) 393–397.

¹²⁶ Grossmann (2003) 127 mentions other colonnaded streets in Egypt.

courtyard (27 by 78 m) through a *tribelon*.¹²⁷ This urbanistic plan, intended to heighten the tension for pilgrims, therefore made use of diverse traditional elements of architecture.¹²⁸ Moreover, once inside the courtyard, the first thing pilgrims would see was a small fountain house, which is thought to have taken the shape of a tetrapylon. Just next to it, the round foundations of what is assumed to have been a columnar monument are preserved. This element has not featured in this overview before, as it is very rare in church complexes (with the exception of columns used by pillar saints). In Late Antiquity, such columnar monuments were only erected for emperors and female members of the imperial house by high officials or members of the imperial court. Columns especially remained a popular medium for expressing imperial power in the capitals.¹²⁹ The occurrence of a columnar monument in this location is, therefore, highly remarkable.

Finally, on the other side of the Tetraconch and the baptistery, a very large colonnaded hemicycle was incorporated, accessible from the primary courtyard through a large gate. This particular sigma-shaped plaza was surrounded by utilitarian structures and its position within the complex indicates that although the same architectural form was used, the function of this courtyard was somewhat different and more private than that of those mentioned earlier in this article.

The combination of all these elements within the framework of this pilgrimage centre suggests that there was a strong organisation steering the creation and no doubt also the management of the Menas sanctuary in the Justinianic period. This is corroborated by the fact that the powers responsible were also capable of usurping large quantities of building elements at nearby Alexandria and having them transported to the site.¹³⁰ It is very reasonable to identify this

¹²⁷ Grossmann (2003) 128.

¹²⁸ Grossmann also remarks that once one neared the centre, one became more impatient and would have been pushing forward, through this funnel, so that the entrance to the courtyard would be felt as a liberation in more than one way, see Grossmann (1998a) 278–279; Grossmann (1998b) 287.

¹²⁹ Jordan-Ruwe (1985) 191–93, 202. In total, 15 monuments are known from Rome and 30 from Constantinople, see Jordan-Ruwe (1995) 53, 124. See Bauer (1996) for an overview of columnar monuments in Rome and Constantinople, 319–321 for the reasons for their erection. Older overviews include Muller-Wiener (1977) 52–55, 248–267; Mango (1985) 25, 32–34, 43–46; von Peschlow (1986); Fowden (1991). The emperor Valens erected an honorific column at Antioch, see Mayer (2002) 99.

¹³⁰ Almost all capitals, columns and other marble decorations used in the Justinianic period in the churches of Abu Mina could be identified as reused materials of fourth and fifth century buildings from Alexandria, see Grossmann (2002) 231.

organization with the patriarchate of nearby Alexandria. It no doubt benefitted from all the pilgrims visiting this highly popular site, and especially from the purchase of religious items there,¹³¹ as well as from the gifts they left behind.

Construction Motives

Although it is far from exhaustive—there is still much to be said about propylaea, tribela, monumental doorframes and imposing staircases, among others—this overview does clarify that, when its function required so, the standard prayer hall could be added to and elaborated in manifold ways. In this final section, I would like to make some suggestions as to why this happened.

It is in any case clear that purely religious motives are not adequate to explain above-mentioned architectural features. If these complexes were only intended to shelter a Christian congregation during communal celebration, a simple prayer hall without any exterior elaboration would have sufficed. And indeed, many neighbourhood churches, which only served their own small community, consisted of nothing more. Conversely, the features mentioned above can often be connected to the cathedral churches of the larger cities of the Empire and certainly to important pilgrimage centres, both of which received a much wider and more diverse audience. The arrival at the end of a pilgrimage, which often involved a long journey under strenuous conditions, must have induced a great sense of well-being and achievement. An adequate architectural framework would only deepen the emotive reactions of pilgrims, strengthen their common identity and would have increased their loyalty to God, but also to the Church and clergy.

In major urban centres, an encouragement of feelings of awe must have also been intended. In addition, when there are epigraphic sources preserved, these indicate a competition of episcopal euergetism in the building of monumental churches, even extending to the adornment of the city and the embellishment of the street network. The episcopal complex at Salona, for instance, is full of inscriptions and also the capitals and lintels of the tetrapylon mentioned

131 The popularity of the sanctuary and the cult of Menas is testified by the widespread use of so-called Menas-bottles or flasks, which are found all over the Mediterranean and which are fairly common in the rest of Europe as well. See Lambert, Pedemonte Demeglio (1994) for the general distribution, Lopreato (1977) for the occurrence in the area around Aquileia, Thompson (1956) and Harris (2003) for two flasks found as far away as the western coast of England.

above carried the monogram of the initiator, archbishop Petrus IV.¹³² Likewise, even though the superstructure of the tetrapylon at Apamea has not been preserved, the occurrence of building inscriptions everywhere else in the cathedral complex makes it very likely that this tetrapylon also carried the name of its initiator.¹³³

These inscriptions confirm that in most—though not all—of the examples mentioned, the initiators of the building projects belonged to the higher ecclesiastical ranks. As it is now clear that they were very well connected to other elite members within society¹³⁴ and, as a consequence, can be expected to have shared ideas and concepts, one of which was no doubt the realization of the possible impact of monumental architecture and an awareness of associations with certain building components. Patriarchs, archbishops and bishops of large sees no doubt also possessed the necessary funds to have elaborate building projects executed.

Moreover, the most powerful of these men were very well positioned to draw imperial attention to their building projects and to have been given assistance from the central administration in the form of financial help, material contributions to the internal decoration of churches or the dispatch of specialists to assist in construction. Imperial interference can indeed be ascertained in quite some of the sites discussed. A church such as the Lechaion basilica can clearly be distinguished from more standard urban or rural churches for several reasons. Its total length from outer atrium to apse is 180 m, which is comparable to the size of the original basilica of Saint Peter in Rome. Its floors were paved with opus sectile panels and the lower walls were clad with marble revetment. Finally, the uniform columns, capitals and screens are of imperially owned Proconnesian marble.¹³⁵ Imperial patronage has also been convincingly argued for the sanctuary at Meriamlik.¹³⁶ Furthermore, the involvement of travelling architects would, for instance, explain why, after the Byzantine reconquest of North Africa, the Rotunda at Carthage was given a sigma-shaped courtyard, which can be interpreted as an intentional transposition of power from the capital to the site, and also why the building was designed according

¹³² Cf. p. 101.

¹³³ Cf. n. 19.

¹³⁴ For an extended discussion on the social background of bishops, see Rapp (2000) 387–92; Rapp (2005) chap. 6.

¹³⁵ Caraher (2011) for imperial involvement in the Corinthia and a discussion on the main motives.

¹³⁶ Hill (1996) 34–35.

to a model that was common in the East, but has not been attested elsewhere in North Africa.¹³⁷

Regardless of whether these complexes were funded with imperial help, it can be stated that the conscious integration of elements such as colonnaded streets, semi-circular entrance courtyards, sigma plazas and arches, among others, in any case established an undeniable relationship between new ecclesiastical centres and the old, secular city. By a shared architectural vocabulary, the transition between the two was softened and the ecclesiastical made more familiar to the population at large. And with the copying of these building elements, the century-old associations of power and dominance were also assimilated within ecclesiastical contexts. Consequently, although it is probably right to stress the innovative aspects and discriminate nature of Christianity, the plentiful attempts to establish a lineage with the past should not be overlooked. We are still a long way from understanding the reasons and mechanisms behind these features. I sincerely hope that reviewing these architectural remains and combining them with historical information can enlighten us on the position of churchmen in Antiquity.

Epilogue: Translation and Dispersion

Despite the fact that most examples known to us now can be connected to large Christian centres and the upper class of Late Antiquity—secular and ecclesiastical—our view may be distorted. We simply know a lot less about smaller urban centres and non-urban settlements. Even though surveys of the countryside are only starting to provide a more detailed picture of the settlement patterns, there are already some indications allowing us to assume that the triumphal rhetoric described above eventually also penetrated lower-status communities. The exedra-shaped entrance to the modest basilica at Mytikas in Greece mentioned above may serve as an example, and so do the two settlements in Cilicia with which I would like to end this overview.

The first is a small settlement located on a hill to the northeast of the modern Turkish village of Akören. This settlement had two churches: an ambulatory basilica located at the top of the village and a more standard church, built some decades later, at the entrance to the site, just next to the road coming from Anazarbos,¹³⁸ the capital of the province of Cilicia II. The village in between is rather ‘messy’. There is one north-south street with side streets on both sides. The Berlin team that surveyed the settlement in the 1990’s counted

¹³⁷ Dolenz (2001) 41.

¹³⁸ Hild, Hellenkemper (1990) 136.

some 90 houses, equalling approximately 450 to 700 inhabitants. The inhabitants of this settlement lived off the land, as is shown by the agricultural installations found. Interestingly, the south church, or at least its west portico, was intentionally built on top of the entrance road. Its southern side is pierced by a large and elaborately decorated arch, while the northern wall is much simpler. This arch functioned both as an entrance to the church and to the settlement. Although the iconography on the arch has clearly evolved and now testifies to the omnipresence of Christianity, the prototype is still clearly recognisable. As said above, the principle of an arch indicating municipal boundaries, the beginning of a settlement, a city, was widely spread in Roman times. The main street of Anazarbos also started at such an honorific arch. Moreover, the assimilation of architectural ideas from the capital into the village of Akören was confirmed by the plan of the north church. This is not the ordinary basilica type common for these provinces, but an ambulatory basilica. The only other example in these parts was indeed the Church of the Apostles in Anazarbos.

A similar monument was discovered in Corycus (Kızkalesi), a commercial entrepot in Cilicia, primarily known for its rich late antique epigraphic record. Nearly 600 individuals, including olive and wine merchants, ship owners, shipbuilders, sail-makers and potters, organized into guilds, recorded their professional status on their sarcophagi.¹³⁹ To the northwest of the settlement, outside the walls, three church complexes were discovered alongside an east-bound road flanked by many burial sites. The road first passed by the Monastic Church. At a distance of ca. 600 m from the walls, the so-called Tomb Church is located and another 500 m further, the Transept Basilica or Church G.¹⁴⁰ The basilica itself was a fairly standard, sizeable building of approximately 60 by 20 metres overall, with a small, perfectly square atrium in front.¹⁴¹ Just to the northeast, exactly aligned with the east end of the Transept Church, the most eastern monument of the settlement was a tetrapylon or in fact a *quadrifrons*, because the monument was domed.¹⁴² Today, only a single pier remains. It could be established that the tetrapylon was covered by a masonry dome.¹⁴³ The alignment and building style of both buildings led to the assumption that they were contemporary.¹⁴⁴

139 Mitchell (1995) 338.

140 Hill (1996) 124.

141 Hill (1996) 126.

142 Herzfeld, Guyer (1930) 110.

143 Hill (1996) 125: "The masonry dome of a bay which was 9 metres square was supported by L-shaped piers which were only 51 centimetres thick."

144 Herzfeld, Guyer (1930) 124–126; Hill (1996) 124.

Both Akören and Corycus therefore nicely illustrate how a rhetoric of power derived from secular prototypes but with a clear Christian purpose eventually also penetrated smaller communities. The physical position of both monuments at the very front of the settlement—in Corycus even including the necropolis—moreover clearly confirmed the supremacy of the ecclesiastical sphere over the entire local community.

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Public Rituals of Depaganization in Late Antiquity

Johannes Hahn

I

Crucial changes in Roman state religion were always matters of special public importance and were staged as spectacular highlights in urban civic life. Their presentation in the form of extensive ceremonies and the impressive display of social and political order commonly surpassed the regular events of the religious calendar with their established processions, sacrifices and feasts. The introduction of a new state god thus unleashed enormous energies and caused exceptional expenses. This was already true in Republican times, when foreign gods imported or ritually transferred from their homes (*deductio*) from abroad for the *res publica's* well-being and military success were received with elaborate *adventus* ceremonies before they were accommodated in costly new temples.¹ It was no less true under the Principate when the death of a Roman emperor who then was voted *divus* by the Senate, and thus destined to become a new state god, triggered, in the context of an imperial funeral, a complex series of many days' day-long rituals participated in by all groups of society. The ritual² of divinisation and *apotheosis* found its climax in the burning of an enormous pyre containing the emperor's corpse or effigy which eventually released the emperor's soul, embodied in an eagle, into heaven.³

1 Rüpke (1990) 162ff.; Beard, North, Price (1998) 69f., 80–89.

2 Although the concept of ritual deserves a thorough theoretical assessment and has indeed unleashed an enormous amount of scholarly debate, I think I can dispense with an attempt to offer a detailed discussion here. My argument covers neither history of religion nor cultural or social anthropology nor ethnology or other fields as such, but is confined to history of religious policy in antiquity. Still, I find the publications of Jonathan Smith, a historian of religion, helpful in particular his classic article: Smith (1988) and his book: Smith (1987). In addition, a useful introduction into the wide field of ritual theory is offered by Dückert (2006). See also Bell (1992). A collaborative venture to apply aspects of ritual theory to the analysis of the world of antiquity has been edited by Stavrianopolou (2006).

3 On the process of deification in Rome see—besides the excellent collection of evidence by Buraselis et al. (2004)—Price (1987); Gradel (2002) 261–320; Zanker (2004). It may be added that deification came also to be commonly extended to empresses, and sometimes to a dynast's sons.

This funerary pyre, the *rogus*, was a monumental structure adorned with incredibly lavish decoration (works of art, luxurious textiles, gold, ivory, enormous amounts of precious fragrance etc.) We would know little of the pyres' sheer scale and breathtaking extravagance—and the enormous logistical preparations for them—if we did not have detailed reports of two imperial funerals, of Pertinax and of Septimius Severus.⁴ The ephemeral architecture of the gigantic pyre, the spectacle of the inferno burning it to the ground, and the rituals connected with the epiphany of a new Roman god or goddess were engraved into the memory of contemporaries and descendants: they were commemorated by poets, and represented on monuments, especially on a rich series of coins, which allowed the ritual and the event to live on for generations.⁵ We see that the funeral procession and the transformation of an emperor—or of an empress—into a *divus* or a *diva* were staged with utmost care and all imaginable effort. The erection of temples for the various *divi*, and religious public calendars of the death anniversaries,⁶ show us that these rites of *divinatio* in the empire's capital constituted the main additions to the Roman state pantheon during the Principate.

Much less, on the other hand, is known of the disappearance or elimination of cults. Although we know of various measures to suppress individual, mostly foreign cults (like the Bacchanalian and, not the least, the Christian one) that were perceived as socially disintegrative or subversive or as imperiling traditional Roman religion (like the Manichaeans, according to Diocletian in his edict AD 297),⁷ the only case where one faces, in the long run, a fairly systematic, long-term effort by the Roman state to repress, eliminate and virtually 'bury' a previously well-established religious tradition or rather group of traditions is the one that tried to put an end to those cults which were bundled up and termed 'pagan' by their later Christian enemies. Many of them former state cults, these sacred traditions with their processions, sacrifices, precincts and shrines, became, after the Constantinian revolution of the early fourth century, first at least increasingly obsolete, then marginalized or abandoned, and later, under varying circumstances, liquidated and broken up. The question is how far this religious policy and, in several cases, prominent process of public closure or destruction of ancient cults and popular cult sites were

4 Herod. 4, 2 (Septimius Severus); Cass. Dio 75, 4–5 (Pertinax). Compare Cass. Dio 56, 31–42 and Suet., *Aug.* 100 for Augustus' funeral, though without details of pyre.

5 D'Ambra (2010); Schulten (1979); Lische (2005).

6 Buraselis et al. (2004).

7 *Mosaicarum et Romanarum Legum Collatio* 15, 3 (FIRA II 580f.). See, most recently, Mosig-Walburg (2009) 168–176 with an extensive discussion of this text.

deliberately staged by state officials in highly charged, demonstrative public acts, to convey the message of a strong imperial will to make an end of any form of traditional religion. To serve that purpose, were such measures executed with the application of religious or other rituals, and so, in powerful symbolic displays, meant to signal the downfall of ancient cults and the extermination of paganism, no less conspicuous than the establishment in the past of new gods, and now, under the Christian empire, the foundation of new, Christian cult sites in the form of imperial (or lesser) churches and martyria? These questions thus touch upon the problem of the public nature of the grand process of Late Antiquity, the Christianization of the Roman empire.

II

Constantine, the first Christian emperor, is reported both to have issued anti-pagan edicts and to have taken specific measures against pagan cults and priesthoods. If we may trust his biographer and Christian historian Eusebius, this exemplary emperor pursued a systematic and effective religious policy which comprised a number of wholesale temple destructions. Even more, we are told that Constantine ordered his agents to systematically annihilate a pagan sanctuary (dedicated to Aphrodite) and to cleanse this traditional sacred space by performing the first ritual of public depaganization—before erecting a Christian place of worship here at the presumed spot of the Holy Sepulchre in Jerusalem. The relevant section of Eusebius' report runs as follows:

Calling upon God to be his collaborator, Constantine ordered that place to be cleared (*katháiresthai*)... At a word of command all the contrivances of fraud were demolished from top to bottom, and the houses of error were dismantled and destroyed along with their idols and demons (*elúetó te kai kathēreīto*). His efforts however did not stop there, but the Emperor gave further orders that all the rubble of stones and timbers from the demolitions should be taken and dumped a long way from the site... But not even this progress was enough by itself, but under divine inspiration once more the Emperor gave instructions that the site should be excavated to a great depth and the pavement should be carried away with the rubble a long distance outside, because it was stained with demonic bloodshed.⁸

8 Euseb., *Vita Const.* 3, 26,6–27. See ad loc. Wilken (1992) 773f.

It would be easy to demonstrate the complications and misinformation of the Eusebian account. They reveal the passage, despite all its detail, as not so much an elaborate, well-informed construction (and destruction!) report, but as a piece of ambitious, if not tendentious, interpretation and wishful thinking. The language of pollution and purification which is applied in the description of the destruction of a pagan temple is closely linked to the initiative and intentions of the Roman emperor: Constantine, in Jerusalem, not only began to establish what later was called the Holy Land, but also developed and forcefully spread the idea of a Christian sacred space. That concept, not previously existing, was soon to challenge, to displace and eventually to overcome the traditional pagan sacred landscape all over the Late Roman world. In the perspective of a visionary Christian thinker like Eusebius, the Christianisation of the *Imperium Romanum*, in a specifically spatial sense, began in Jerusalem with the uncovering of the Saviour's tomb and the search for other places made sacred by his and his followers' lives—instigated by the emperor Constantine who soon started to destroy pagan sanctuaries elsewhere also and to supplant them with Christian places of worship.

It is important to see that for Eusebius the ritual dimension and connotations put forward in his report of Constantine's agenda in Jerusalem serve a particular purpose: The cleansing of the pagan cult site is needed in order to make the discovery of the true and holy burial place of Christ and to erect, in due course, the church of the Holy Sepulchre. This precious disclosure of sacred place can, in Eusebius' conviction, only have taken place in the context of a systematic purification of the whole area: all remnants, even the most insignificant traces, of the former, corrupting cult had to be completely removed, the spot of Christ's burial systematically cleared with ritual intent, and thus restored to its pure, sanctified former state.

The programmatic character of Eusebius' account extends even further. His insistence on the complete purification of the holy site as an indispensable precondition for the burial spot's discovery implies a plain mission: to spread, now, the message of Christ in a way equally radical and offensive in the Roman world and to eradicate paganism once and for all. So, first Constantine's church building program, in Jerusalem, Palestine and elsewhere, is laid out by Eusebius in great detail, then an extravagant and lengthy description of the demolition of pagan temples all over the empire is given. However, as we know, the proper nature, extent and purpose of this Constantinian anti-pagan agenda is far from clear.⁹ We do not know how far temples were actually destroyed by his command, and whether demolition or despoliation of sanctuaries or

9 See only Errington (1988); Bradbury (1994); van Dam (2007); Barnes (2011), summing up and adding fresh evidence to his thesis that Constantine pursued aggressively Christian policies.

simply the confiscation of temple treasures for fiscal purposes was the guiding idea behind Constantine's measures against pagan cults and infrastructure. The occasional removal of cult statues from major temples for transfer to the new capital Constantinople, where they were put up on show and embellished public buildings and places, bears little weight. Eusebius has to work hard, and draw on all his linguistic resources, to turn Constantine's beautification of his city with famous statues and cult objects into an anti-pagan gesture. And our bishop has to put forward the dubious argument that the citizens of the capital thus could laugh scornfully at the powerless statues' ignominious fate. To imply that the city's Christian population ritually mocked the pagan gods and their images in their new environment—in the Hippodrome, the palace etc.—is at least contestable.¹⁰

The remaining accounts of Constantinian temple demolitions or spoliations, whether from the pen of Eusebius or of other authors, Christian and pagan alike, all lack any indication that ritual precautions or other symbolic procedures were being used before sacred spaces were entered or emptied by imperial magistrates and soldiers.¹¹ Businesslike action characterized the appropriation—or plunder—of temple property, property which was in many cases legally owned by the emperor and fiscus anyway. Evidently, on this level at least, the grand historical process of Christianizing the Roman Empire took a very pragmatic turn, if in fact we can actually spot that process here, in these measures, at all (which is somewhat doubtful).¹²

Similarly plain and sober treatment of pagan cult sites in the course of the execution of imperial anti-pagan policy or in serving fiscal necessities, and likewise in the straightforward oppression of paganism, is documented elsewhere too. The Theodosian Code preserves under the heading *De paganis, sacrificiis, et templis* (On Pagans, Sacrifices and Temples), in book 16, chapter 10, most of our legal tradition in this respect, covering the period from AD 321 to 435. These edicts abound in bans and prohibition. They focus on interdicting sacrifices and soon on the closure of temples, and they prohibit any rituals in temples (and of course they early on fight and strictly criminalize, magical practices). Despite the occasional use of degrading terms and language—*superstitio* is the common term for any pagan practice, temples are in one single instance called *polluta loca*¹³—the overall attitude expressed, in the course of the fourth

10 Cameron, Hall (1999) 301f.; Saradi-Mendelovici (1990); Bassett (2007).

11 Euseb., *Vita Const.* 3, 54 and *Laudatio Const.* 8, 1–4. Compare *Anon. de reb. bell.* 2, 1; Eunap., *Vit. soph.* 461; Liban., *Or.* 30 (*Pro templis*), 6; Zos. 5, 24, 6.

12 Metzler (1981); Bonamente (2011), with a much less rigorous interpretation.

13 Cod. Theod. 16,11: *Iudex quoque si quis tempore administrationis suae fretus privilegio potestatis polluta loca sacrilegus temerator intraverit, quindecim auri pondo, officium vero...*

century, is objective, almost neutral, in strong contrast to many anti-heresy laws and to language used against pagans in the early fifth century.¹⁴ In AD 391, an imperial edict sent to Egypt only repeats austere: “No person shall be granted the right to perform sacrifice; no person shall go around the temples; no person shall revere the shrines. All persons shall recognize that they are excluded from profane entrance into temples.”¹⁵

Not only do these legal texts show hardly a trace of the typical rage Christian authors breathe in these decades when they come to talk of pagan worship and temples: the imperial legislator, instead of aggressively denouncing the cult praxis and sanctuaries of what still represented the majority of the empire’s population, shows a remarkable restraint. It should be noticed that, as early as the year AD 342, temples, the hearts of the pagan sacred infrastructure, were, as monuments, as landmarks, and as reference points for established spectacles and festivals, explicitly placed under imperial protection, and their destruction forbidden.¹⁶ It is only the simple closure of temples and the prevention of the performance of sacrifices on their premises which is decreed, as is later also the removal of any remaining cult statues and altars. Besides stripping the pagan infrastructure by taking these precautions against any religious function, there were no ritual means applied: we never hear of purifying or expiatory acts by Roman officials or local magistrates. This should not surprise us: in view of the strong remaining groups of the local population which clung to the old religion, any demonstrative procedure would have run the risk of

14 There are, until Theodosius I., rather few instances of derogatory or denigrating language in respect to pagan cult practice and sites in the Codex: 16,10 speaks of cult images *et mortali opere formata simulacra suspicia* (in 16,8 they are denied *divinitas*)—cf. 16,10,12,3: *mortali opere facta et aevuum passura simulacra*. The strongest words that are found expressed in any imperial legal pronouncement against pagan practices are preserved in one of the *novellae* (complete, not abridged, as all entries of the *Codex Theodosianus* are) contained in the private legal collection of the *Novellae Theodosii*, here no. 3 (dating, however, to as late as AD 438): Millar (2006) 119–123, with an excellent analysis.

15 Cod. Theod. 16,10,11,1: *nulli sacrificandi tribuatur potestas, nemo templa circumeat, nemo delubra suspiciat. interclusos sibi nostrae legis obstaculo profanos aditus recognoscant adeo...*

16 Cod. Theod. 16,10,3. The edict to the Praefectus Urbi in Rome explains, *quamquam omnis superstitio penitus eruenda sit, tamen volumus, ut aedes templorum, quae extra muros sunt positae, intactae incorruptaeque consistant* (“although all superstitions must be completely eradicated, nevertheless, it is Our will that the buildings of the temples situated outside the walls shall remain untouched and uninjured.”). For the legal protection of temples in Late Antiquity see Meier (1996); Geyer (1993). See also various observations in contributions to Lavan, Mulryan (2011).

inciting religious passion and fury, if not open civil unrest. Not to jeopardize public order, however, was a prime administrative concern in the execution of religious policy. And we can assume that the implementation of these controversial laws (as long as they were obeyed at all) was preferably effected without making a big fuss. One law of AD 399, years after the recognition of Christianity as state religion, and giving, for the first time, the legal permission to pull down temples (though only in the hinterland of Rome) explicitly made the proviso, *templa sine turba et tumultu diruantur*—"the temples have to be torn down without trouble and turmoil."¹⁷

The key strategy of the Roman administration in the subsequent secularization of temples and of sacred spaces consisted in transforming them into alternative public premises—into offices for tax inspection, residences for imperial officials, warehouses, even prisons;¹⁸ that means their proper and efficient (re-) use as imperial property. Again, in the fourth century, beyond the removal of cult objects, to turn this property into real estate and to new functions clearly did not require or imply any ritual.

III

So far I have argued that the Roman administration, in its anti-pagan policy, followed a course of limited action: avoiding openly humiliating acts against paganism despite the step by step restricting of pagan religious practice. Pagan gods and their cults were marginalized, their relevance and vitality undermined, and paganism gradually ousted from public life.¹⁹ Pagan images and symbols, however, were not, in staged public acts, demonstratively degraded or ridiculed nor pagan devotees in such ways wilfully provoked by Roman magistrates. Suppression of paganism by state authorities neither meant nor comprised the use of highly charged rituals of depaganization or any exorcizing practices.

17 Cod. Theod. 16,10,16: *si qua in agris templa sunt, sine turba ac tumultu diruantur. his enim deiectis atque sublati omnis superstitioni materia consumetur.*

18 Liban., *Or.* 30, 42 with a bid for offices for tax inspection. See, as exemplary, the situation in Oxyrhynchus in the fourth century, where, still prior to the religious edicts of Theodosius I, the Hadrianeum had been transformed into a prison and the Caesareum (both, deified emperors' shrines) into a public building (and later a church), and the temple of Theoris into a living quarter; P.Oxy. 43 & 2154 and PSI 175 with van Haelst (1970) 501.

19 For the measures taken in Rome, where a strong tradition-minded aristocracy tried to preserve the city's ancient customs and cults, see e.g. Lizzi Testa (2007), with important observations as regards legislation, and now, with a different focus, Cameron (2011).

In the fourth century we know of only one exception and this deserves our special attention. It was Gallus, the emperor Constantius' nephew and then Caesar for the East, who in Antioch in AD 351 transferred relics of a Christian martyr, bishop Babylas, from their resting place in a sub-urban cemetery. Gallus instead placed the body in the midst of the renowned sanctuary of Apollo in Daphne, beside the Castalian spring, thus silencing (so we are told at least) the famous oracle.²⁰ This first relic translation in church history, followed by the erection of a small martyrium, was clearly staged as an act of sacral aggression. It may have also tried to express some kind of Christian appropriation of the city of Antioch's main sanctuary. Its exorcistic character is plain: the superior power subjugated the oracular demon (Apollo) and conquered the sacred pagan site. This powerful ritual aggression would later challenge the pagan emperor Julian, Gallus' brother. In AD 362 he tried to restore the sanctuary's former spiritual status by employing a centuries-old purification rite. The Christians of Antioch responded to the unearthing and release of their former bishop's relics with a triumphal liturgical procession that carried back the martyr's remains to their original resting place. For them, the inability of Julian to revive the oracle proved the victory of the Christian religion over paganism, in this religious—and ritual—contest.²¹ Gallus' aggressive intervention is exceptional for a state official. But contemporaries were impressed (or shocked) by his Christian religious zeal more than once and neatly invented a colourful story of the devotion and piety of Gallus already as young man—quite in contrast to his pagan brother Julian.²²

Gallus' ingenious invention of bodily relic translation is a crucial step in the evolution of the Christian idea of sacred space and its potential extension. And it is of primary importance for the now emergent Christian practice of contesting, conquering and permanently appropriating other religious groups' holy places. The ritual means for waging these battles were processions, exorcistic practices, worship, liturgy, sometimes physical violence—and they aimed not only at closing or disabling, even destroying pagan cult sites and holy places but also at uprooting and annihilating them, and often, at least symbolically, at

20 J. Chrys., *De S. Babyla c. Iulian.* 67ff. (XII) (PG 50, col. 551ff.); Sozom., *Hist. eccl.* 5,19,12f.

21 Amm. Marc. 22,12,8. Compare Hdt. 1,64,2f. and Thuc. 3,104,1f. For the Antiochean Church's procession see J. Chrys., *De S. Babyla c. Iulian.* 90 (XVI) (PG 50, col. 558); Sozom., *Hist. eccl.* 4,19,18f. and *Artemii passio* 55 (p.233, Kotter = GCS Philostorgius, p. 92, Bidez—Hansen).

22 Greg. Naz., *Or. adv. Iulian.* 1, 25 and Basil., *Hom.* 23 (on St. Mammias) with a story (taken up by Sozom., *Hist. eccl.* 5,2 and others) about the young brothers' common attempt to build a martyrium (when Julian, not yet emperor, was still publicly Christian): Gallus' part succeeded but Julian's fell in ruin.

taking them over and replacing their former spiritual power with the deployment and permanent presence of symbols, agents or buildings of the Christian religion: crosses, ceremonies, monks, monasteries, churches.

The theological and popular convictions behind these proceedings are clear: In Christian eyes, the simple closure of a pagan precinct or sanctuary, even its clearance of idols and other cult objects or complete destruction, could not remove the inherent pollution of the place, stained with the blood of sacrifices and other abominable rites. There still remained malign spirits, demonic powers left behind which haunted the place and any visitors or passersby. The purification of any such places and objects was thus inevitable. Hagiographical accounts and church histories abound with stories of exorcism.²³ Here, Christianization in regard to paganism is not simply carried out by the dismantling or suppression of pagan cults and idols but thoroughly and lastingly effected by rites of exorcism, thus depaganizing places, objects and persons. Like the ritual of baptism which stressed exorcistic procedures for anyone to become a Christian, which meant a pure human being with a new life, so any public or private space once affected and polluted by sacrifices and pagan worship needed to be cleansed and purified: with the help of appropriate means, that is, powerful rituals.

IV

It is important to realise that the whole repertoire of rituals—the overthrow and breaking of statues, the redesignation or even destruction of temples, the ridiculing of sacred pagan objects, the application of Christian symbols to polytheistic shrines etc.—must not be taken at their face value, i.e. as pointed acts of Christian appropriation or Christianization. This, of course, is the message our Christian sources generally undertake to convey. The triumphalistic self-representation of the late antique church in its confrontation and competition with pagan (and other) cults and groups is a guiding principle of late Roman church historians and hagiographers illustrating their teleological perspective on history.²⁴ A closer look at our evidence, however, reveals that many cases of *prima facie* Christian destruction or appropriation of pagan sacred places do not entail a Christianization of a site proper: Often there is no permanent appropriation, no transformation into a Christian site, but only the

²³ See Brakke (2009a) and Brakke (2009b).

²⁴ For Christians' magnification of their victory over paganism, cf. Papaconstantinou (2001) 244–259.

desecration or profanation of a particular precinct or holy site by a demonstrative act or ritual: a symbolic defilement or functional disabling of a formerly powerful pagan cult site.

These are, e.g., the true events that stand behind one of the most spectacular temple-destruction traditions of Late Antiquity, the end of the temple of Tanit–Caelestis in Carthage—the main city-goddess of the province's capital with roots back into Punic times and widespread popular veneration in the Roman empire and in Carthage in particular until Late Antiquity, into the time of Augustine.²⁵ In an atmosphere of heated religious tensions and occasional eruption of bloody civic strife in North African cities, the provincial church succeeded in AD 399 not only in obtaining fresh anti-pagan laws from the emperor in Milan which, besides abolishing pagan rituals, specified the taking down of all idols in temples (alas, *not* ordering temples to be destroyed), but also the bringing in of Roman high officials from the imperial court who sealed the temples in Carthage and overthrew the statues of their gods.²⁶ The actual transformation of the temple of Tanit–Caelestis into a church, however, is said to have been carried out by Aurelius, bishop of Carthage (391–429).

The later Carthaginian bishop (431–439) Quodvultdeus' eyewitness report based on his presence as a youth narrates how bishop Aurelius, perhaps in AD 407, leading a large Christian crowd in an Easter procession to the abandoned temple (allegedly still being protected by dragons and snakes), took possession of the sanctuary where Aurelius placed his cathedra in its midst and sat on it.²⁷ Though accompanied by miracles this did not mark the Christian takeover of the temple (and no transformation into a church either), contrary to the impression given by Quodvultdeus. It was much later, perhaps in AD 421, that the emperor Constantius eventually ordered the rooting out of the whole building. He did this, so we are told, in order to stop blasphemous practices by members of the Christian community who kept worshipping Caelestis in her former sanctuary and to deprive popular prophecies which promise pagans the restitution of the temple to Caelestis of their material prerequisite. Aurelius' impressive Easter procession with the participation of the whole Christian congregation thus represented *no* Christianization of the famous sanctuary; it meant no more than a symbolic act, and ritual, of depaganization.

The information given in passing that the abandoned temple still frightened Christians who believed that demons and dragons were lingering about the

25 For a detailed analysis and historical contextualisation of the following episode, see Grillo, Hahn (forthcoming).

26 August., *De civ. Dei* 18.54.

27 Quodvultdeus, *L. promiss.* 3,38,44.

site elucidates and emphasizes the key reason why, contrary to Christian propaganda, hardly any pagan temple in Late Antiquity was swiftly and smoothly turned over to a church or otherwise persistently Christianized. Temples, in the view of many contemporaries, could or did retain much of their awe-inspiring, frightening aura; they still were likely, or suspected, to house demons long after the abolition of their cults or after emptying them of all their images and cult inventory. Not a few claims of turning pagan shrines over to Christianity and of transforming them to places of Christian worship are thus indeed very late: they signal that this final act, often still of exorcistic or apotropaic intention, had taken place generations after the site had been abandoned.²⁸

V

The cultic appropriation of a complete urban space by the new religion—and simultaneously the utter destruction of a pagan sacred cityscape—is spectacularly documented in the case of Egyptian Alexandria in AD 392. And these violent events, initiated and staged by the city's bishop, Theophilus, illustrate the extent to which the factual and symbolic seizure of the city's religious and social life was carried out, how the explicit goal of depaganizing a city with a strong religious polytheistic tradition and of redefining its sacral identity was accomplished by carefully planned action and staged public rituals. I shall only outline some details here of the measures following the destruction of the famous Serapeum by the partisans of bishop Theophilus.²⁹

The attack itself represents a highly revealing case of religious violence. It may only be noted that the violent defeat of Alexandria's pagan cults was launched with a Christian procession through the midst of the city, exposing and parading offensive pagan cult objects that had been retrieved from

28 This clearly is the message of the following building inscription from Zorava (Hauran, Syria), AD 515 (Dittenberger, O.G.I.S. no. 610): "(This) has become a house of God which (once was) a lodging-place of demons (*theou gégonen oikos tò tôn daimónon katagógion*): saving light has shone where darkness covered: where (once were) idols' sacrifices, now (are) choirs of angels, and where God was provoked to wrath, now God is propitiated (*hó pou thusíai eidólōn, nūn choroì angélon, (kai) hó pou theòs parōrgízeto, nūn theòs exemenízetai*). A certain man, Christ-loving, the primate Ioannes, Diomedes' son, at his own expense, as a gift to God, made offering of (this) noble structure, placing herein the revered relic of (the) holy martyr Georgios, the gloriously victorious, who appeared to him, Ioannes, and not in sleep, but manifestly, in (indiction) 9, in (the) year 410 (= AD 515)." For the issue see also Bayliss (2004) 50–57: "The chronology of conversion".

29 For a detailed discussion and all references see Hahn (2008b).

a hidden cave (indeed, once a Mithraeum) during building operations for a church. Later, Theophilos and his mob did not confine themselves to the destruction and plundering of the Serapeum complex. Here they celebrated, besides destroying the famous library with the literary patrimony of the pagan tradition, by the smashing of the wooden cult statue. Fragments of this eminent statue of Serapis were dragged into various districts of the city and burned there in front of numerous onlookers.³⁰ Of no less symbolic nature was what was done to the remaining torso of Serapis: it was set ablaze in the city's main theater, that is, in the central meeting place of the citizenry. This incineration was celebrated as a religious statement; most likely this staged event was centrally orchestrated to symbolize the city's ritual cleansing from the pagans' erroneous beliefs and her former main god.

The truly comprehensive character of these actions is revealed by the fact that countless small Serapis busts fixed to pedestals on the streets and crossings of Alexandria were likewise demolished—and promptly replaced by signs of the cross, all apparently within a few hours or days.³¹ The ongoing destruction of temples of other polytheistic deities in the city added to this public ritual of urban depaganization. And pagans, at least, will have seen subsequent Theophilian measures in much the same light: the swift settlement of monks in the ruins of the great Serapeum, conspicuously towering on a natural acropolis over the city, did more than erase the venerable pagan site. But the bishop did not stop there: soon he founded a martyrium of St. John the Baptist on the hill which received the precious relics of the saint that Theophilos was able to procure from Palestine. And finally he erected a proper church named after Arcadius, the Christian emperor, on the grounds of the former pagan sanctuary.³² All these measures aimed at seizing possession of the physical and symbolic fabric of the city, capital of Egypt. We are not surprised to hear that the holy Nilometer, which was used to measure the annual rising of the river Nile, was conveyed to a Christian church—previously it had been kept in the Serapeum.³³ Thus the city now belonged to Christ and the God of the Christians, no longer to Serapis.

The range, thoroughness and unmistakably aggressive intolerance of the Alexandrian bishop's proceedings in his city are striking and symbolically highly charged. So pagan cult statues were *not* generally destroyed or removed

30 Rufin., *Hist. eccl.* 11,23.

31 Rufin., *Hist. eccl.* 11,29.

32 Sozom., *Hist. eccl.* 7,15,10. Compare, however, J. von Nikiu, *Chron.* 83,37 (p. 88, Charles) who names Honorius, Theodosius' younger son, as the church's name patron.

33 On the Christianization of the cult of the Nile, see the comprehensive account in Bonneau (1964) 421ff. See also Frankfurter (1998) 42ff.

in silence; rather, many of them were profaned publicly or, doubtlessly even more provocative to the pagan population, used to decorate Christian churches. They were trophies of victory, and were to honour the God of the Christians: embedded in new spatial and liturgical contexts they became symbols of the Church's triumph over paganism. One particular episode highlights the Church's triumphalistic contempt with respect to the now humbled pagan beliefs. Bishop Theophilus himself preserved one statue from destruction, that of an ape-like god (probably Hermes-Thot). He had it displayed publicly in order, as he put it, (I quote) "that the pagans cannot later deny that they worshipped such gods."³⁴

The remarkable forms of expression in the religious clash we encounter in Alexandria in AD 392, as spectacular as they may appear, are nevertheless not in principle surprising. They resemble processes of violent religious conflict in other periods of history which focus on the suppression and physical destruction of competing cults. Especially the phenomenon of iconoclasm, whether in Byzantium or in 16th century central Europe and elsewhere, quite regularly displays comparable patterns. Physical attacks against buildings and, in particular, religious images and objects mostly do amount to much more than simple acts of destruction. They are directed against symbols of religious authority, which of course often is connected to political authority. At the same time such violence attacks social systems and structures which are bound to the cult and its organisation.

Such hostilities manifest themselves usually in more or less ostentatious public acts. Ritual connotations are not only involved because potentially powerful images or objects are attacked which 'need' exorcism. Their destruction may take the form of a ritual in other senses too: this—for instance the burning of the image—is conceived and staged as a symbolic inversion of existing devotional ritual. Thus the torso of Serapis,³⁵ while being destroyed, is sacrificed, burned in the public space which he formerly governed as city god, ritually executed in front of the populace. Ritually staged are also the preparations for this climactic moment: from the breaking up of the image to the dragging of the overthrown statue (or rather its left-over mutilated pieces) through the streets and all their dirt, where it is exposed to insulting, cursing, staining and further maiming by onlookers.³⁶

34 Socr., *Hist. eccl.* 5,16,12f.

35 Rufin., *Hist. eccl.* 11,23.

36 Contemporaries, of course, were well aware of the parallels to the treatment of 'bad' emperors; an official *damnatio memoriae* was regularly followed by the mistreatment of the emperor's statues and even attacks on the corpse; Varner (2004), with rich documentation.

The magical-symbolic acts of degradation and humiliation are of key importance for any such rituals of iconoclasm—and for depaganization. Iconoclastic acts also make evident the connection between ritual degradation and denigration and rituals of purification and punishment. In Alexandria, the use in churches of statuary from temples, as ornamenting angels etc., their permanent display in ‘dishonest’ places—the famous Tyche of Alexandria had, as a contemporary noted, later to dwell as a barmaid in a tavern³⁷—, the putting up of the statue of the ape-god in a marketplace: the attitude in such practices is perpetuated beyond the iconoclastic spectacle proper. The irreversibility of the Christian Church’s triumph was thus demonstrated and continually called into mind.

VI

Beyond the observations and arguments presented so far, the issue of the destruction of cult images deserves additional attention and consideration. Cult statues as the most meaningful, explicit and powerful symbols in almost all religious systems are destined to become, evidently, primary targets of religious violence when cults are displaced. In a way, they are privileged objects for any kind of physical or ceremonial assault, thus even providing their name to mark several fundamental religious, respectively theological, changes in history, iconoclasm(s), ‘image-breaking’. In Late Antiquity, images, in particular cult images and statues, became exactly such privileged targets of aggression, often in ritualised forms, by Christians. Such action expressed the common pagan belief in the inherent power and potential animation of these religious objects. The *Hermetica*, a body of pagan theological-philosophical texts written in Late Antiquity,³⁸ preserve the direct statement, “statues . . . are ensouled and conscious, filled with spirit and doing great deeds; statues foreknow the future and predict it by lots, by prophecy, by dreams and by many other means;

37 This is the theme of several epigrams of the contemporary poet Palladas who mourned the overthrow of the images of the various pagan gods in almost a dozen short pieces: *Anth. Gr.* 9, 180–183 (on Tyche); 441 (Heracles); 528 (Olympian gods); 773 (Eros); 16,282 (Victories). See, however, a recent suggestion to redate Palladas to the time of Constantine: Wilkinson (2010), including different interpretations of these epigrams.

38 For the *Hermetica*, their character and time of production, see Copenhagen (1992) xiii–lxi; Fowden (1986). Compare also the surviving fragments of the Neoplatonist Porphyry’s treatise *On images* which seems to have taught *inter alia* the adoption of a proper attitude toward ritual images. For this tract see most recently Krulak (2011).

statues make people ill and cure them, bringing them pain and pleasure as each deserves.”³⁹ For Christians, it was essential to render these images powerless, to remove them from their consecrated contexts. The mutilation, destruction or desecration intended to publicly reveal the images as impotent, although such procedure at the same time in a way confirmed iconoclasts’ underlying belief in or suspicion of the potential real power of any such objects.⁴⁰

Our most detailed description of a search and bringing to light of numerous cult images and sacred texts, its subsequent climax in the form of a public ritual of destruction and incineration of all the retrieved objects, we owe to the rhetor, lawyer and historian Zacharias, who later became bishop of Mytilene and was author of the *Vita* of Severus, bishop of Antioch, which contains eye witness descriptions of several relevant incidents in the heated religious atmospheres of Berytus and in particular Alexandria.⁴¹ There, later in the fifth century, some zealous young Christians and monks, following a hint from a pagan fellow student, rush to nearby Menouthis, location of a famous but now well disguised subterranean Isis shrine, to raid it. After discovering and breaking up the place, they first pull down the building complex to bury the cult objects underneath the rubble but later come back to collect all the images venerated in the subterranean structure, to burn some of them in the presence of local villagers on the spot and to bring twenty camel loads with various images to Egypt’s capital. Here, on a Sunday, the bishop has already arranged for assembling the whole population in the centre. What follows, is a highly revealing series of exorcistic and destructive acts, staged as a public ceremony under the direction of the bishop:

As we were bringing them (i.e. the twenty camels loaden with idols) to the centre of the city, as the great bishop Peter had ordered us to do, he immediately summoned the prefect of Egypt and the leaders of the

39 *Asclepius* 24 = NHL VI.69,28–70,2 (ed. J.-P. Mahé 1982, trl. Copenhagen p. 81).

40 Such belief probably lies behind most acts of iconoclasm independent of the specific religious system of the aggressor. See e.g. Flood (2002); van Asselt (2008).

41 Zacharias, *Vita Severi* 61f. (trl. Ambjörn pp. 62–65) describes a first successful search for “books of magic which contained pictures of evil demons, and barbarous names, and presumptuous and pernicious promises, books filled with pride, and utterly pleasing to the evil demons . . .” in a private house and their destruction by fire: the owner—whom the zealous Christian students “planned carefully how, with God’s help, we might liberate him from the error of demons and from the danger that he was facing”—himself had to light the fire and “throw the books of magic into it with his own hands, and said that he thanked God who had granted him with his visit and liberated him from the slavery and error demons.” For the *Vita* and its historical significance see recently Watts (2005).

troops, and all who had any authority, like those in the senate, the great men of the city, and the wealthy, before the so-called Tychaion. When he was seated with them, he had the pagan priest (who had been captured in Menouthis) brought to the centre, and ordered him to stand in an elevated place. When the idols were brought to the centre, he asked: "And what is the demonic cult of this soul-less matter?" And he ordered him to give the name of each one of them, and what was the formal cause of each one of them. Already, all the people were hurrying there to look, and they listened to what was said, and then made fun of the ridiculous powers of the pagan gods that the priest was telling them about. When the bronze altar was brought, and the wooden dragon, he admitted the sacrifices that he had dared to offer, and that the dragon (serpent) was the one that had led Eve astray. This had been conveyed to him by tradition from earlier priests, he said, and he admitted that the pagans worshipped it. And so the dragon, too, was turned over to the fire with the rest of the idols. And after that the people, so to say, were heard shouting: "Look at Dionysos, the god who is a female! Look at Kronos, the Childhater! Look at Zeus, the adulterer and lover of young boys. There's Athena, the virgin and lover of war, and there's Artemis, the huntress and hater of strangers. Ares, that demon there, is making war, and that one is Apollo, who has destroyed many. There's Aphrodite, the first lady of prostitution! And there is a patron of theft among them [i.e. Hermes], and Dioynysos [is a patron] of intoxication. And Io! Among them is the insolent dragon, and dogs and monkeys, too, and even litters of cats—for they, too, are Egyptian gods!" They were mocking other idols, too; and broke the hands and feet off those that had any, and cried laughingly in the local language: "Their gods have no *qarumtitin!*, and "Here's Isis, coming to bathe!" They were shouting many similiar things at the pagans, and praised [emperor] Zeno, who ended in the fear of God, who held the sceptres of the empire at that time, and Peter, the great high priest, and the leaders of the city who were seated with him. Then they all went off, praising God for the destruction of such error of demons and idolatry . . .⁴²

The events in Menouthis and Alexandria which presumably took place in AD 489 represent much more than a systematic purge and destruction of a still active pagan cult site and its idols or an eruption of iconoclastic violence. The discovery of an enormous cache of images, some of them apparently rescued from other sacred places, is the starting point for a staged public annihilation

42 Zacharias, *Vita Severi* 32–35 (trl. Ambjörn pp. 32–36).

of the pagan past and, in particular, of cult images which, in the eyes of the beholders, might still possess demonic powers. Thus, most of the tremendous religious booty taken by the zealous Christian monks and students in Menouthis is specially transported to the capital and paraded there on camels (not simple carts or horses), doubtless an unfamiliar view in the streets of Alexandria, and paraded through the city where the population had already been assembled by the bishop. The iconoclastic, and exorcistic, showdown is staged—the parallels to the events in 392 are again striking—in the very center of the city, on a public square: under the eyes of the magistrates and all the leading members and groups of the metropolis' society, including the imperial representatives for Alexandria and Egypt.

The quasi-ceremonial extermination of the pagan cult images, comprising a wide range of Greek and Egyptian gods and goddesses—a true Pantheon indeed—must have taken hours. Each of them is called up and singled out for special attention, exposed, named and then explained to the population in respect to their individual myth and function. This procedure deprived every god or material object symbolically and 'literally' of its 'unspeakable' power. Its effect is doubled by the fact that this ritualized unmasking has to be carried out by an indisputably ritual expert, namely the pagan priest who had been responsible for the secret operation of the cult center and had been captured in the course of the raid. The procedure is *prima facie* aimed at informing the audience, most of them doubtlessly no longer familiar with these pagan gods and their images, about the particular appearance and alleged nature of all the divinities presented before they undergo their destruction.

But besides, by arrangement of the bishop, publicly inventorying the pantheon of Hellenic and Egyptian traditional religion, the staging is also intended to incite collective Christian enthusiasm and mob action: citizens rush to bring potential cult objects from their homes or other places, they actively search for more in other houses, and then burn the plundered images in the street. No less important are further aspects of the public event, in particular the ritualized neutralization of the alleged remaining demonic powers of the cult images: following their individual exposure the objects are collectively mocked by the people and one after another broken up and, so far as possible, systematically mutilated. The expository and exorcistic intention of this action is evident, and so is a purificationary aspect in the collective execution by and participation of the populace.

Still, this elaborate desecration and destruction of such a comprehensive, and most likely deliberately assembled, range of pagan divinities and cult images should neither be taken as a public performance of Christianizing these pagan remnants—nor does it express a symbolic act of Christianizing

the city or its population either. What is staged and evoked in the annihilation of these images is a demonstrative public act of depaganization: hidden survivals of the religious tradition of the past and of the former identity of the city are being conquered and overcome once again. That this is done with pointedly ritual means indicates that the lingering popular suspicion, if not fear, that such objects could still house demonic power and jeopardize normal Christians in their everyday life, had to be countered. Or the Christian (and non-Christian) population had to be assured, with a powerful demonstration like the one staged by the bishop, of the incontestable, invincible power of the Christian religion and its worldly agent, the Church. This public demonstration had to prove the irrevocable triumph of Christianity and visualize, almost re-enact, a devastating humiliation of the ancient traditions that were known to have once secured and guaranteed the greatness of the city and the empire.

VII

Again, this striking demonstration of the primacy and superiority of the Christian religion in the face of the disclosure of a carefully hidden and once highly important pagan cult center in the hinterland of Alexandria is organised by the church, not by state officials—and more than that: it is cast into elaborate ritual forms, partly derived from Christian exorcistic practices. Imperial or civil magistrates only participate by joining the audience, but they take no active role for themselves. The response to the existence of a secret pagan cult site and illegal religious practices, which otherwise qualified for capital punishment for any person involved, seems to have been left to the Alexandrian church, or rather may have been usurped by the bishop. The development of public rituals of depaganization in Late Antiquity, at least until the reign of Justinian, was a domain of the church. We saw before that imperial legislation and state officials showed a remarkable restraint in openly tackling pagan issues and hesitated to enforce systematically and powerfully their religious policy. But of course, there already existed traditions of powerfully and ritually suppressing and eradicating prohibited religious beliefs: the practice of book burning is, for the issue at hand, particularly instructive and important.⁴³ Not surprisingly, the intentions and strategies that can be shown to stand behind the destruction of images or to inspire the staging and execution of their annihilation can be proven to exist here as well.

43 Modern standard works for this practice in antiquity are Speyer (1981); Sarefield (2004). For the latter see abridgements of his research in Sarefield (2007).

In Rome, such a procedure may have been applied for the first time in 181 BC when the senate ordered the burning of several newly discovered religious books, supposed to be writings of legendary king Numa, because they threatened to “dissolve religion”. Various other instances of public bookburning are on record in Republican and Imperial times.⁴⁴ In all cases the public rite of burning was made a spectacle and represented a ritual at a chosen public place, sometimes underlined as a religious one by the use of ritually significant material for the pyre like fig wood, or the participation of sacrificial attendants to kindle it.⁴⁵ The destruction of divinatory and astrological writings or magical handbooks of various sorts clearly required such distinctive ritual treatment in order to give a forceful public statement of power by the perpetrators, state officials, and to prove the powerlessness of the beliefs, prophesies, incantations and charms that were being burnt.⁴⁶ Later, Diocletian proscribed Manichaean books as a threat to society and the same happened to Christian books after the edict which started the Great Persecution.⁴⁷

This well established tradition was kept up by Constantine. But his first documented measures now enforced decisions of church councils. Following the renewed condemnation of the Montanist and Gnostic sects by the council of Nicaea, he suppressed their assemblies and ordered that their books should be hunted out. The wording of his rescript commanding to search for and burn the books by the pagan Porphyry and Christian Arius has survived.⁴⁸ However, most imperial initiatives against dangerous books after Constantine apply to magical works. More remarkable is that the initiative to search for ‘heretical’ as well as magical books passes over to the Christian ecclesiastical hierarchy. And it is they who most often stage the books’ public burning. But the church history of the fourth and fifth century is not only marked by countless pyres devoted to the incineration of heterodox groups’ writings: by the fifth century, bookburning had come not only to be a preoccupation of the Church but had also come to be performed by its officials, covering pagan writings as well.⁴⁹ The imperial legislation now bears testimony to the remarkable shift

44 Liv. 40,29. Compare 39,16 with one consul’s speech at the Bacchanalian affair of 186 BC indicating that foreign prophetic and ritual texts had been searched for and destroyed several times before.

45 Sarefield (2004) 33ff. Liv. 40,29; Lucian, *Alex.* 47.

46 Sarefield (2006) 288f.

47 Sarefield (2004) 185ff.

48 Euseb., *Vita Const.* 3,63–66; Socr., *Hist. eccl.* 1,9,20f.

49 Sarefield (2006) 291f. with a collection of instances. See, for one instance, the striking description of one bookburning in Alexandria in the late 5th century AD: “... we placed bonfire in full view in front of the church of the holy virgin and mother of God, Mary,

of responsibility: official sanction and, at times, active support by the state are provided for church officials to carry out imperial edicts about persecuting magicians and other religious groups, in particular closing assembly places and burning their books.⁵⁰ But the task of seeking out and burning forbidden books could now, indeed, no longer be restricted to bishops or church officials: monks and leaders of monastic communities proved their religious zeal by searching for and uncovering sacred texts and destroying them.⁵¹

VIII

The Roman state may not have developed rituals of depaganization of its own. But we should not underestimate the impact imperial edicts or other pieces of legislation had on public opinion and perception, due to the elaborate way they were made public in every city and community of the empire. Imperial laws and edicts were omnipresent not only because they were visibly posted on stands and walls in the midst of the cities and read aloud in the governors' and municipal magistrates' courts. In particular the modus of their proclamation must have been an extraordinary and awesome event and experience.⁵² The news of a law's arrival immediately spread in the town, and the governor or local magistrates convened the citizenry for the purpose of pronouncing and reading aloud the new legislation as the emperor's explicit order. The reading

while everybody was watching the magic books and the demonic signs burn, first listening to what he was reading." Zacharias, *Vita Severi* 69f. (trl. Ambjörn p. 70f.).

50 Cod. Theod. 16,5,43 (AD 407); Const. Sirmond. 12 (AD 408); Cod. Theod. 9,16,12: "... after the books of their false doctrine have been consumed in flames under the eye of the bishop." (AD 409).

51 Thus the Coptic archimandrite Shenoute, head of monastic communities of several thousand monks and nuns, in a famous episode, repeatedly searched the town house of his (crypto-) pagan opponent, the aristocrat Gesios, in Panopolis, for divine images, magical potions and pagan sacred texts, and proudly reported the successes of his investigation and the ensuing ritualized destruction of his finds which he eventually dumped in the Nile by night: Besa, *Life of Shenoute* 125–127 (trl. Bell p. 77f.), using Shenoute's own writings where the incident is mentioned several times. See Emmel (2002); Hahn (2004) 238–241 (for this episode). Shenoute sought for and destroyed Gnostic texts as well; it has even been suggested that the hiding of the famous library of Nag Hammadi may have been due to his systematic raids on religious opponents in Upper Egypt: Young (1970). For numerous other instances—indeed, the destruction of dissident and pagan texts became a topic in late antique hagiography—see Sarefield (2006) 293f.

52 Harries (1999) 70ff; Matthews (2000) 187–189; Hahn (2012) [2014].

in front of the population was staged and highly charged as an imperial event. It was one of the rare moments that the common citizen could almost listen to his emperor's voice when the governor or the high magistrate read the imperial pronouncement from beginning to end and everybody had to listen motionless and silently: this, no doubt, in a fearful mood and in an intimidating and overawing atmosphere. The audience got to hear, in the often long introductory explanations, the *praefationes* of the laws (which are unfortunately preserved only in very few cases),⁵³ sometimes extensive moralising discourses which revealed the emperor's strong convictions and personal attitude to political grievances. At such moments the imperial subjects, as participants of a state act, faced their emperor's *persona* and were at the same time embedded within a ritual, a powerful symbolic display and strongly imagined moment of the imperial presence. The effect of *sacrae litterae*, the message of the imperial pronouncement, no doubt unfolded, in particular when concerned with issues of personal devotion and public religion, to no lesser extent than rituals staged by the church. These imperial pronouncements may not have included visual and sensory effects as striking as the burning of books or the breaking of objects. But the required display of the imperial *imagines*, the *signa* of the various magistrates and other elements of the grand display of imperial power, in particular the strong rhetorical arrangement and argument of the text read aloud, would not miss their purpose. Thus, the imperial declaration of anti-pagan measures and proscriptions could indeed match rituals of depaganization staged by the church. However, it has to be stated that otherwise symbolic acts in battling pagan tradition were left by the late Roman state to the church.

State officials, from Constantine's reign on, may have stripped pagan sanctuaries of their altars and cult statues and sealed temples. But it took the late Roman state generations to give up its relative restraint towards traditional cult and eventually, as regards first the pagan majority, then a strong pagan minority, to sacrifice the primacy of intra-communal peace to the issue of

53 The great Codes regularly clipped these parts of the elaborate legal pronouncements they had to 'edit' for the production of the comprehensive, thematically structured reference codification, so that we possess *praefationes* in their entirety only in cases where they have been transmitted independently, as is e.g. the case with Diocletian's price edict which contains an extensive, powerful *suada* on the rotten morals of merchants and other agents in the economic field. Particularly instructive with respect to *praefationes* are the *Constitutiones Sirmondianae* (and the later *Novellae Theodosii*) which represent complete legal texts with their long moralising introductions. For the *Constitutiones Sirmondianae* see Vessey (2000) 160ff.

religion, of monotheism and of Christian state religion. In these many decades between Constantine and the Theodosian dynasty, no ritual or other standard approach, besides the closure of temples and the removal of their sacred inventory, was developed; no finalizing, profaning, purifying or expiatory acts for Roman officials were available. The simple removal of statues—in prominent cases their subsequent display as pieces of art in public or private collections—not the destruction, mutilation or desecration of these or other objects, and the physical preservation of temple buildings, governed imperial policy and action.

More far-reaching action and, in particular, concrete ritual means for publicly profaning, suppressing and uprooting pagan cults (beyond their physical disabling) had to be ‘designed’ and applied by the Christian Church. So we should perhaps not be surprised to eventually find in one of the very last entries of the Theodosian Code on pagan matters, dated to AD 435, the ruling “We command that all (pagan) precincts, temples, and shrines, if even now any remain entire, shall be destroyed by the command of the magistrates and shall be purified by the sign of the venerable Christian religion” (i.e. the cross).⁵⁴ Here the surviving and still illegally venerated remnants of the outlawed pagan religion are ordered to be destroyed and their numinous power broken by the application of crosses, that is, by the aid and exorcistic ritual of the Church.⁵⁵ Now, the Roman state’s and the Church’s agenda had converged in a conspicuous and symbolic way.

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54 Cod. Theod. 16,10,25 (14. Nov. 435 n. Chr.): *cunctaque . . . templa delubra, si qua etiam nunc restant integra, praecepto magistratuum destrui conlocationeque venerandae Christianae religionis signi expiari praecipimus*. It is the only instance we find in the legal tradition.

55 For a spectacular example of the practice of applying crosses at temple walls, namely in Philae (where a prominent part of the Isaion was, under Justinian, transformed into a church) see Nautin (1967) esp. 14ff. with Hahn (2008a). See also Engemann (1975); Trombley (1993) 102ff. & passim (with additional documentation). For the connection of temple destruction and temple purification (including exorcism), see Hahn (2000).

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Lingering Sacredness. The Persistence of Pagan Sacredness in the Forum Romanum in Late Antiquity

Kristine Iara

Object of this study is the sacredness of the Forum Romanum in the late antique period. In contrast to most previous studies dealing with Rome in late antiquity, it will focus on persistence within transformation. The main and only focus is on the sacredness of the place. However, all possible manifestations of sacredness will be taken into account. Adopting a synoptical view on the Forum in its entirety in terms of sacredness, the paper will analyze the means and ways in which sacredness was generated on the one hand, and how it persisted and adhered on the other. The main thesis is that the sacredness of the Forum in Late Antiquity was not maintained by large scale actions and great accomplishments of the 'last pagans of Rome'. Other mechanisms than these were the reasons that the Forum kept its high degree of sacredness for a longer time than most other areas of Rome. Therefore, the paper argues for low-profile mechanisms of the persistence of the sacred. These mechanisms will be named 'lingering sacredness'. The term 'sacredness' will be used in the broadest range of meanings and conscious of its vagueness. However, the vagueness of the term is in line with the vagueness of the different forms of how pagan religiousness could be practiced and could be manifest on the one hand, and how these different manifestations and its elements could be perceived on the other.

1 The Evidence

The late antique Forum Romanum¹ has been investigated from many points of view, as an architectural ensemble, in its quality as public space, its role in political life, as a place of representation, or the various aspects of its

1 Essential studies on the Forum Romanum (also with older bibliography): Coarelli (1983); Coarelli (1985); Purcell (1995); Tagliamonte (1995); Köb (2000). In particular for Late Antiquity: Giuliani, Verduchi (1995); Bauer (1996); Bauer (2005); Machado (2006); Bauer

transformations in Late Antiquity. Also the Forum's once prominent, now declining role within the city that came along with the diminishing role of Rome within the empire has been examined, just as well as the impact of the ongoing Christianization of the empire, of the elite and also, materially, of the city of Rome, onto the Forum. However, there is still a lack of analysis of the Forum Romanum as a sacred landscape in its entirety for the late antique period.

Based on the results of previous studies, we may start from the following. The building activities carried out by the tetrarchs² after the great fire in 283/4 determined the appearance of the Forum Romanum for the following centuries in a significant way, as they also reshaped the orientation and the general setting of the Forum square. Some of the buildings destroyed by the fire were rebuilt in their old appearance.³ The Forum square itself, though, underwent a significant reshaping in terms of its conceptual design. First of all, the square was framed⁴ and its orientation changed. By means of these works, the Forum gained a new appearance as an enclosed space, and its architectural alignment was shifted from the longitudinal to the transverse. This had an impact on the view axes from and across the Forum and also on the connections and the viabilities between the Forum and the surrounding areas.⁵

(2011); Muth (2011); Coates-Stephens (2011). For a plan of the Forum in Late Antiquity: Muth (2011) 267 fig. 2. On the Imperial Fora: Meneghini (2007); Meneghini (2008).

- 2 Chron. 354: *His (scil. Carino et Numeriano) imperantibus [...] operae publicae arserunt: Senatum, forum Caesaris, basilicam Iuliam et Graecostadium [...]; his (scil. Diocletiano et Maximiano) imperantibus multae operae publicae fabricate erunt: Senatum, forum Caesaris, basilica Iulia [...]*. In particular, for the tetrarchs' works: Coarelli (1999); Bauer (2005); Ziemssen (2007) 56–59; Ziemssen (2010); Bauer (2011) 7–25.
- 3 Such as the Curia: Tortorici (1993) 332–33; Bauer (1996) 7–11; Bauer (2011) 12–18; for the areas of the Forum afflicted by the fire: Bauer (2011) 11 fig. 7.
- 4 The rostra at the two narrow sides of the Forum square were equipped with five honorary columns respectively. These rows of columns were connected by a third row of seven columns set in front of the Basilica Iulia at the south side of the square: Bauer (1996) 21–26, 31–32, 42–43, 101–03; Coarelli (1999); Bauer (2011) 57–65; Muth (2011) 277 fig. 5.
- 5 In this regard, Sande (2003) 101–103 makes two observations. First, that 'during the 4th century, the high point for visiting emperors appears to have been neither the Forum Romanum nor the Capitol, but the Forum Traiani', toward which the Forum Romanum in its new appearance faced; and second, that by these measures, two important temples have been left out, that is, the temple of Divus Iulius and the temple of the Dioscuri (see the explanations *ibid.* 102). Actually, also the temples on the western side of the Forum (the temples of Concordia, of Divus Vespasianus and of Saturnus) were left out. It is, therefore, not so much about leaving out the two temples on the eastern side of the Forum, but rather about creating a background—the Basilica Iulia and the temples—and a foreground, which became, as

The Forum Romanum had always been an area coherent both in topographical and functional terms: a polyfunctional piece of public space bearing the highest degree of sacredness. Despite the above-mentioned changes in the architectural setting, the conceptual design and the Forum's embedding in the surrounding areas, it maintained its role as the center of the city and its role as public space *par excellence* in Late Antiquity.⁶ In addition to its concrete functions for practical use, such as matters of administration, jurisdiction, cult, and politics—elements of civic and public life inseparable from one another—the Forum also had a pre-eminent significance as a site, and as a monument, even, which represented common history, common memory and generated collective identity. It had a particular and prominent role not only in the cityscape as such, but also, and mostly important, in the self-concept of the Romans, representing values such as their traditions, the millennial common history, and it still continued to be a place essential for the collective identity in Late Antiquity, at least for the elite, independently of the respective religious affiliation of the individuals. Accordingly, on the Forum, there was an unparalleled concentration of buildings and monuments which served one or more of the above-mentioned concerns, thus generating, perpetuating and maintaining meanings and significances crucial for the common memory and the collective identity.⁷

In Late Antiquity, the Forum Romanum looks back on a multilayer stratigraphy of representing: evolved in the course of several centuries, in different forms of expression and manifested variously, with various purpose and intentions. Its overall character was shaped by permanent elements, such as buildings and monuments, as well as by ephemeral ones, such as events, festivals, or ceremonies. These ephemeral events of political, ceremonial, and religious character⁸ also shaped the Forum permanently, inasmuch as most of them took place regularly and were repeated continuously, and they involved collective gathering. These events were in most cases lavishly staged and were

Bauer (1996) 102 observes, an 'abgeschlossener Raum, in dem nun Monumente imperialer Selbstdarstellung dominierten'.

6 Coates-Stephens (2011).

7 This aspect is illustrated by Hölkeskamp (2001) (not for Late Antiquity, though).

8 These can be events such as assemblies, the emperors' public appearance, triumphal processions, religious events such as processions or festivals (the Saturnalia, Dec. 17th, for example, are attested to have been celebrated in Late Antiquity; the *transvectio equitum*, July 15th, is still recorded in the Calendar of 354: Degraasi (1963) 483, 538–540). The Forum was the location that provided the setting for all of these events; it was a location of representation and visibility, of action, perception and interaction. See also Bauer (1996) 124–134; Köb (2000); Coates-Stephens (2011).

carried out with great expenditure. The Forum Romanum, as Rome's public space *par excellence*, was, among all other possible locations within the *urbs*, matchless, and the most meaningful stage for these events and being an indispensable and intrinsic element of the overall setting.

1.1 *The Large Scale Cult Buildings*

All the cults and the respective buildings which left evidence on the Forum belong to the *sacra publica*. Three temples for the imperial cult are present in the Forum. They all stand on prominent, deliberately chosen places. Unlike most of the other temples or cult places present on the Forum, which have a long history, these ones were founded *ex novo* and are first of all representative monuments of mainly political-dynastic character. Nevertheless, their being a proper temple and their genuine sacredness are also evident, first of all manifest in their formal appearance, and also by means of facilities for the cult itself, such as a basis for the cult statue. Activities within the imperial cult are rarely attested in the imperial period; for Late Antiquity not at all.

As for the temples serving the official cults, that is, the temples of Saturn, the Dioscuri, Concordia and Vesta, they have a very long history, and all, except for the temple of Concordia, had been standing since time immemorial on cultic spots of very ancient tradition. All of them, the temple of Concordia included, are tightly connected to the (mythical or factual) history of the city of Rome, and all of them, except for the temple of Vesta, have, beyond their cultic functions, associated ones, at the outset or developed in the course of the centuries, be it in the political, the administrative or the economic field and they were therefore of multifaceted character. For these temples, there are various kinds of evidence for continuous maintenance, use, or simply ongoing existence in Late Antiquity. The often stated difficulty of determining and, moreover, of distinguishing the motivations behind the maintenance of or care for whichever temple especially in Late Antiquity—religious or 'secular' interests—is, precisely because the multifaceted character of these temples, only a seeming difficulty: one cannot distinguish the motivations behind their maintenance at all, because they are not separable.⁹

9 Likewise, the argument often used in scholarship that possible 'secondary' functions of a particular temple may have enabled its longer survival in Late Antiquity, after the interruption of its primary function, that is, the cult, is based on wrong assumptions: Temples do not really have 'primary' or 'secondary' functions. They have their cultic function, and many other ones, be it political, administrative, archival, else—which we may call 'associated' functions. But these are as important as the cultic functions, and an intrinsic part of the temple's existence. The erection of most temples already has been initiated for a multiplicity

In the following, the cult buildings at the northwestern side of the Forum are taken into closer examination focusing on their sacral aspects. This side of the Forum is dominated jointly, and strongly, by four buildings with sacral connotation which stand together in close proximity and thus form a sacred square of its own right. Framing the Forum at its western side, standing next to each other in a row, the temple of Concordia, the temple of Divus Vespasianus and the Porticus deorum consentium appear as a sacral façade, dominating the Forum from the slope of the Capitol Hill. The strong visual impact of this façade and the aura of sacredness emanating from were even emphasized by the presence of three temples in a row on top of the Tabularium.¹⁰ At right angles to this line, facing northwards, is the temple of Saturnus.

In Late Antiquity, the temple of Concordia¹¹ was already looking back on a long history. Its erection in the mid-republican period was due, in the first instance, not to religious motivations, but, first of all, to the necessity of realigning the balance of powers and of issuing a statement in this regard, which was monumentally expressed in architecture. In the case of this temple, the inseparability of religious and political interests is particularly obvious, as is also the significance of the temple for political concerns. According to its strong political character, it had various associated functions in the political field, for example, it was used for meetings of the senate.¹² Its associate functions were, however, also in other spheres: the temple of Concordia is famous for having contained well-known objects of art, thus being a sort of treasury.¹³ At the same time, cultic activities are attested in the archaeological record: votives both of small scale and larger examples testify to concerns both personal and for the emperor's well-being, therefore to the expression of religiousness and loyalty to the emperor alike.¹⁴

of motivations, among which the religious motivation was one of many, even if, ostensibly, the principal one.

- 10 Coarelli 2010.—The Curia, which stood also in this area of the Forum, won't be treated in this paper. It also contributed, by means of its plurivalent character, sacral and secular alike, to the sacredness of the Forum.
- 11 The temple was dedicated in 367 BCE; two renovations are attested, in 121 BCE and in Augustan times respectively. Gasparri (1979); Ferroni (1993) 316–320 (list of literary and epigraphic evidence); Köb (2000) 56–70.
- 12 Evidence listed by Ferroni (1993) 319.
- 13 Evidence listed by Ferroni (1993) 318–319.
- 14 CIL VI 90–94, 3675a, discovered *in situ* in the temple's cella, Ferroni (1993) 317. Also the Arval Brethren have been using the building for their meetings, evidence listed by Ferroni (1993) 319.

At present, very little of the building is conserved *in situ*; only the temple's foundations are still visible. Scarcely anything from the rising structures is preserved. Some pieces of lavishly decorated architectural elements have been conserved,¹⁵ giving an impression of the splendor of past times. Both the remaining structures and the elements of architectural decoration derive from the Augustan period: there are no traces whatsoever of architectural interventions in Late Antiquity in the material evidence.

The Anonymus of Einsiedeln gives the inscription placed on the temple's architrave:¹⁶

S(enatus) P(opulus) Q(ue) R(omanus) | aedem Concordiae vetustate collapsam | in meliorem faciem opere et cultu splendidiore restituit.

In scholarship, this inscription is often considered as evidence for a re-building of the temple in Late Antiquity, arguing that the formula *vetustate collapsus* would be characteristic for this period.¹⁷ Therefore, the temple of Concordia is often considered to be one of the major accomplishments within the context of pagan religiously motivated activity in late antique Rome. However, the formula *vetustate collapsus* and similar phrases, all of which have been considered as typical for Late Antiquity, were also used in times before and are therefore no indication for a late antique dating.¹⁸ Therefore, there are no reasons to deduce a late antique dating of the inscription and the renovation to which it refers.

15 Gasparri (1979) for a catalog and discussion of all architectural fragments; von Mercklin (1962) 201–204 no. 494 on the capital.

16 CIL VI 89.

17 Or giving no reasons for this dating at all. Pensabene (1984) 60 ('[...] dalla tipica formula che ricorre in essa' [...]), 67 n. 6; Ferroni (1993) 319; Muth (2006) 448; Muth (2011) 269. Bauer (1996) 27 cautiously without dating; assuming, though, either the fire in 283 or the destructions in 410 as possible reasons for the temple's *collabi*, which is however improbable, as Bauer himself admits, because the reason for the necessity of building measures as given in the inscription is simply *vetustas*. Walser (1987) 94 actually suggests a dating for the inscription and therefore for the rebuilding in question in Augustean times. Gasparri (1979) 2 states that the material evidence reveals that the temple was damaged or even destroyed by a fire, but there is no indication to determine which fire that was and when the disastrous event took place. See Bauer (2011) 10 (the inscription cannot be dated).

18 A famous example is provided by the Severan restoration of the Pantheon. See Thomas, Witschel (1992) 143–147; Behrwald (2009) 49–53.

What do we have, then, as evidence? Actually, not much: there is no proof whatsoever for a rebuilding or a renovation of the temple of Concordia in Late Antiquity. By removing the constraint of dating the inscription in this period, we lose one object from the list of late antique temple renovations, but we also get out of the dilemma of having a late antique inscription which mentions a renovation, but lacking any trace of this intervention in the archaeological record.¹⁹ Then again, the temple of Concordia is listed in the regionary catalogs. Furthermore, the fact that the Anonymus could still read the inscription means that the temple, at his time, must have been in fairly good condition.²⁰ Hence, the temple of Concordia dominated the northwestern edge of the Forum very visibly in Late Antiquity, too,²¹ and contributed to the concentration of sacredness by distinct visibility.

The temple of Divus Vespasianus, standing next to the temple of Concordia, is, first of all, a political monument, which is evident from the obvious inscription, the purpose of the erection of the building, and the intentions of the builders i.e. Titus and Domitian.²² This is emphasized further by the connections between this temple and the temple of Divus Iulius.²³ This latter temple faced the temple of Vespasian directly, being opposed one to the other on the two respective narrow sides of the Forum Romanum, strengthening thus the dynastic aspects and the political importance of the new temple for the Flavian dynasty. The two temples were, in Imperial times, connected by a direct sight axis. After the erection of the rows of honorary columns on the two narrow sides of the Forum in the third century, this direct sight axis was refracted, fragmented and multiplied by numerous columns and the respective intercolumnia. Thus, the Imperial connotation was even more emphasized by means of the statues of the emperors which capped the honorary columns.²⁴

19 There is also the possibility that the inscription announces more than it was in actual fact carried out. On this question see Thomas, Witschel (1992); Fagan (1996).

20 See also Coates-Stephens (2011) 388 n. 9.

21 For the temple's destiny in middle ages and later: Gasparri (1979) 2–10, Ferroni (1993) 319; Coates-Stephens (2011) 388 n. 9.

22 The construction has been initiated by Titus and completed by Domitian, De Angeli (1999) 124. On the temple: De Angeli (1992); De Angeli (1999); Köb (2000) 101–106.

23 The temple of Antoninus Pius and Faustina is there, too, but technically speaking, not in regio VIII.

24 To be exact, on the western side, four of the columns were capped by statues of the emperors' *genii*, the central column by a statue of Jupiter. Those on the eastern side could not be reconstructed yet. This is a distinct and obvious link of political and sacral matters. On the columns see above n. 4.—Furthermore, the Temple of Vespasian, on its prominent position at the western side of the Forum, is directly connected by a straight

This building is, at the same time, unequivocally a temple. Although we do not know much about cultic activities for the cult of the *divi*, we know about the existence of the newly founded college of the *flamines* and *sodales* for the ministration of the new cult.²⁵ The genuinely sacral function of the building is further confirmed by the presence of a basis for the cult statue in its cella.

The temple of Divus Vespasianus²⁶ is a hexastyle temple of Corinthian order. At present, three columns of the pronaos with a piece of the entablature, some remains of the walls of the cella and of the basis for the cult statue are preserved.²⁷ The inscription on the architrave²⁸ testifies to a restoration carried out by Septimius Severus and Caracalla; no interventions or destructions are attested for Late Antiquity.²⁹ The temple is listed in the regionary catalogs and mentioned in other late antique written sources.³⁰ From this, and also the fact that the Anonymus Einsidlensis apparently could read the inscription in its entirety, we may assume that the temple was in sound condition in his time. Even though it is sure that the temple was not used for cultic purposes anymore from, at the latest, the end of the 4th century on, it is an important fixture within the sacral landscape of the Forum also in Late Antiquity, contributing considerably to the aura of sacredness. Apart from its characteristic appearance as a 'classical' standard Roman temple of Corinthian order, its sacral aura was further underlined, visibly and strongly, by the sculptural decoration of its lateral friezes.³¹ The cultic instruments represented in relief³² act

view axis with another supremely important building erected by the Flavian emperors, the Colosseum. This is a statement in two directions: firstly, stressing the continuance of dynasties by means of a fallback on the Julio-Claudian emperors; secondly, applying strong connections to other structures erected by the Flavians within the city, and therefore setting a Flavian imprint all over the center of Rome.

25 Köb (2000) 101–106 (evidence listed). However, we do neither know much about the ritual activities within the cults for other gods; the case of the imperial cult is, therefore, regarding the lack of record no exception.

26 See De Angeli (1992); De Angeli (1999).

27 De Angeli (1999) 124–125.

28 CIL VI 938. *Divo Vespasiano Augusto SPQR | imp̄p̄ Caess Severus et Antoninus | Pii felic Augg restituer*. In spite of being mentioned in some late antique sources as *templum Vespasiani et Titi*, the temple has always been dedicated only to Vespasian, see De Angeli (1999) 124.

29 The temple is not mentioned as being destroyed by fire; nor is any restoration in Late Antiquity known: De Angeli (1992) 159–163; Bauer (2011) 10.

30 Listed by De Angeli (1999) 125.

31 The zone of the front frieze was, as also the architrave, entirely occupied by the inscription attesting the Severan restoration.

32 *Urceus, aspergillum, patera, galeus, securis, malleus and culter*. De Angeli (1992) 93 figg. 86, 87, 139–148 (for a discussion of these objects and their meanings).

as substitutes for the real objects, indispensable in cult. Being eternalized in stone, though, they are everlastingly and permanently present, not only during the ephemeral ritual activities of cult.

Next to the temple of Divus Vespasianus, on the outer end of the façade formed by the three buildings that enclosed the Forum on this side, there are still the remains of the Porticus deorum consentium. Its present appearance is the result of restoration works carried out in the 1850s.³³ The building consists of two porticoes which join one another in an obtuse angle. Behind the porticoes and underneath on a lower level there were eight and seven rooms respectively.

The Porticus deorum presents different problems than the two buildings discussed above. First of all, the inscription on the architrave provides clear indications for a precise dating:³⁴

[Deorum C]onsentium sacrosancta simulacra cum omni lo[ci totius adornatio]ne cultu in [formam antiquam restituto | V]ettius Praetextatus v(ir) c(larissimus) pra[efectus u]rbi [reposuit] | curante Longeio [... v(iro) c(larissimo) c]onsulari

But a dating of what exactly? Vettius Agorius Praetextatus,³⁵ responsible for the works carried out mentioned in the inscription, held office as *praefectus urbi* in 367; Longeius was supposedly in charge as either *curator statuarum* or as *curator operum publicorum*.³⁶ Usually treated in scholarship as one of the outstanding rebuilding works of Late Antiquity, Praetextatus' work is either interpreted in the context of the last days of paganism, struggling to keep up the traditional religion, or in the context of the efforts undertaken by senatorial aristocracy, aiming to maintain past splendor and vanishing prestige, and it is always taken for granted that Praetextatus' work consisted in a re-building of the Porticus. This is, though, not necessarily the case. The inscription does not mention explicitly a restoration of the building itself.³⁷ From the inscription

33 On these restorations and on the consequences for the documentation and the future examinations of the building, see Nieddu (1986) 38–40.

34 CIL VI 102.

35 PLRE I (Praetextatus 1).

36 Kahlos (2002) 91 n. 176.

37 Bauer (1996) 27, 136, with the necessary caution: 'Die Götterbilder dieser Halle wurden i. J. 367 vom Stadtpräfekten Vettius Agorius Praetextatus wiederaufgerichtet und der Kult in der alten Form wiederaufgenommen. Ob sich mit dieser Maßnahme auch Reparaturen an der Zwölfgötterportikus verbanden, ist nicht sicher zu bestimmen'; cf. though, *ibid.* 75:

we may only deduce that the *praefectus urbi* did some kind of work concerning the *sacrosancta simulacra* and restored the cult.³⁸

In fact, this notion finds confirmation in the archaeological material. There is no trace of late antique material whatsoever in the evidence. The figural capitals seem most likely to be of Flavian or Trajanic manufacture, as is also the *opus latericium*-brickwork.³⁹ So, if Praetextatus had restored the building, he would have done so using the existing architectural elements, thus rendering the building as it appeared in its former appearance;⁴⁰ or, as is argued here, he actually did no restoration at all concerning the architectural structure.

Second, another problem regarding this building lies in its rather uncanonical layout and the resulting lack of unequivocal identifiability of its functions. It surely cannot be defined as a 'temple' in the usual sense.⁴¹ Furthermore, independently of whether the supposedly twelve statues of the *dei consentes* were placed in the eight rooms of the upper level or between the eleven intercolumnia of the colonnade, it remains an odd arrangement given the quantity of the gods—twelve—vs. eight rooms, or twelve gods vs. eleven intercolumnia respectively. And last, the building was not only rebuilt hastily in the 19th century, but several of its elements⁴² are simply lost. These obvious insecurities notwithstanding, the identification of this building has rarely been doubted or discussed in scholarship.

Castagnoli proposed an identification of the building as Domitian's *atria septem*, mentioned only by the Chronography of 354 as being among the building activities of this emperor, and he interpreted them as structures for administrative purpose, as is usual in case of buildings denominated *atrium*. This

the measures became even a 'Wiederaufbau'. Pensabene (1984) 61; Kahlos (2002) 91–93; Muth (2006) 448; Muth (2011) 269 n. 11.

38 Bruggisser (2012) 346–347 on whether *cultus* means cult or elements of decoration.

39 von Mercklin (1962) 261–262 on the capitals. Nieddu (1986) 46–48 divides the capitals into two chronologically distinct groups. Cf., though, Coarelli (2009). Nieddu 1995, 10 on the *opus latericium*. A brickstamp (CIL XV 823, Trajan) has been identified in the eighth and smallest chamber, which means a possible intervention in this time.

40 This is not unusual in ancient building practice.

41 It cannot be defined as a 'temple' in the modern sense, and neither as an *aedes*. The evidence upon which the building itself has always been connected with the denomination *aedes* is too weak: *Aedes* is, only once, mentioned by Varro (I.L. 8.71), but it is not said that he refers to this particular building on the Forum (*cur appellat omnes aedem Deum Consentium et non Deorum Consentium?*); and then (rust. 1.1.4): *duodecim deos consentis* [...] *urbanos quorum imagines ad forum aurate stant*—but, NB, this time not mentioning a building, but statues.

42 Coarelli (2009) 77–81.

assumption has been rightly contested by Palombi who argues that *atria septem* is not to be understood as the proper name of one particular building, but simply as numeric information: there were seven buildings of the type *atrium* in and around the Forum. Nevertheless, Castagnoli has a point when recognizing the office character of the building rather than *in primis* cultic.⁴³

Reassessing the lost, but documented pieces unearthed in the 16th century and the inscriptions found together with these, Coarelli⁴⁴ assumes that the rooms were indeed for administrative purpose, *atria* indeed; in particular, the official buildings of the *scribae librarii* and the *praecones* of the *aedili curuli* who are mentioned in the lost inscriptions. As for the number of the gods, Coarelli suggests that it was seven of them, and not twelve, and that they were placed in the smallest of the total of eight rooms, which has to be regarded as the *sacellum* of the building. Thus, each of the seven rooms, offices, would have had its own *genius*, seven statues in total. This number would find confirmation in one of the lost inscriptions, which, according to Coarelli, would belong to this building: beyond the building and among other things, A. Fabius Xanthus and Bebryx Aug. I. Drusianus donated *imagines argenteas deorum septem*.

Coarelli seems to be right when interpreting the off-size room as the structure's *sacellum*. It is also likely that all gods were accommodated together in this *sacellum*. His identification of the gods in question as *genii*, though, is inconsistent, especially because he refers to the inscription of Praetextatus as evidence, in which explicitly *dei*, even more, the *dei consentes*, and not *genii*, are mentioned.⁴⁵

To sum up before turning to the third point within the discussion of the Porticus deorum and the appendant structures in Late Antiquity: the Porticus deorum was neither a temple nor a building of mainly cultic function. Its genuine purpose was to serve as offices, possibly for the *scribae librarii* and the *praecones* or some other officials, and to which the above-mentioned inscriptions may or may not have belonged. As any building of this kind, it was equipped with a *sacellum*—the smallest of the eight rooms—which accommodated the

43 Castagnoli (1964) 195; Palombi (1993) 132. Pensabene (1984) 80 connects the rooms, dissociating them from the Porticus, with the *aerarium Saturni*. His hypothesis is that the cultic area would pertain only to the portico and the rooms would have been a separate issue.

44 CIL VI 103; discussed by Hülsen (1888) and Coarelli (2009) 77–81. Coarelli argues that the architectural fragments unearthed in the 16th century, including inscriptions, which had been documented and then got lost, belong to this building. It may be the case, given the close proximity, but it is just as possible that the elements fell down from the Capitol, where they belonged to one of the several buildings which stood there.

45 Coarelli (2009) 79.

statues of the gods. Thus, it did have, as usually buildings of this kind, a particular sacredness of its own. Given that the *dei consentes* are explicitly mentioned in the inscription of the 4th century, as is also a group of the same deities mentioned by Varro to have been standing on the Forum,⁴⁶ and given the relative constancy of gods and the places they inhabited in the Roman world as well, it is more than likely that there were indeed twelve statues representing the twelve *dei consentes*.

Turning to the third point of discussion and herewith returning to Late Antiquity: The inscription and the presumed rebuilding of the porticus by Praetextatus, usually regarded as one of the prominent actions of the last pagans in Rome, have often been interpreted as an action of Praetextatus driven by religious motivation and as a proof of his commitment to the traditional cults. But is it the case?

In fact, looking at the inscription, one might place it into the context of the religiously motivated activities of Praetextatus: The objects of restoration are specified as *sacrosancta simulacra*,⁴⁷ and therefore objects from the religious sphere. However, Praetextatus carried out these works in office as *praefectus urbi*, *curante* his colleague Longeius.⁴⁸ The action, of whatever it consisted, therefore testifies to Praetextatus correctly fulfilling his duties in a secular office rather than to his religiousness itself. Praetextatus as *praefectus urbi* was in charge of maintaining public buildings in general, of whatever purpose, sacral and non-sacral alike.⁴⁹ Accordingly, this inscription cannot be interpreted as a manifestation of religious commitment or as a public demonstration of being a pious pagan. Rather, it should be seen simply as an administrative document; in this aspect, it demonstrates prestige (being *vir clarissimus* and *praefectus urbi*), power and respectability.

However, because we are quite well-informed about Praetextatus' life and his career, sacral (priestly) and civic (secular) offices likewise, we may assume, based upon the entirety of the information drawn from the epigraphic corpus related to him,⁵⁰ that he also had a religiously motivated interest in the maintenance of this (and also other) cults.

46 Varro as above n. 41.

47 A thorough discussion of the inscription and especially also of the terms used in it: Bruggisser (2012).

48 PLRE I (Longeius).

49 And as regards the sacral buildings, independently of whether they were serving the pagan or the Christian cult. Kahlos (2002) 93.

50 Collected evidence in PLRE I (Praetextatus 1); Kahlos (2002).

The contribution of the *Porticus deorum consentium* to the sacredness of the Forum in Late Antiquity was, therefore, neither one of form—it was not a temple, hence its architectural design did not have the unequivocal and immediate recognizability of a temple—nor of a sumptuous restoration, nor of any other striking visibility for the passerby, as expressed by architectural monumentality. Furthermore, as regards visibility, the divine statues, even in their new splendor—whatever the measures undertaken by *Praetextatus*—were not even visible to the passerby, as statues of this kind stood inside of a *sacellum* of the kind as described above, inside their dwelling. Without doubt, though, the Romans knew about their presence.

Hence, the contribution of the *Porticus* to the Forum's sacredness became manifest in an intermediate, subtle and non-monumental way, not less perceivably, though: the presence of the *sacellum*, the gods within and the collective knowledge of their existence. This was further and very visibly emphasized by the inscription, elaborately put on the entire length of the architrave, announcing sacredness and eternalizing both the gods and *Praetextatus* in large red letters.

The last building on this side of the Forum, the temple of Saturn, closes the square formed by the hitherto discussed buildings as it stood at right angles to their façades, occupying the Forum's southwestern corner. The cult of this god is one of the most ancient cults in the Forum;⁵¹ at the same time, the temple was, in its preserved structure, the most recently restored cult building in the Forum area. The cult itself was celebrated from archaic times till Late Antiquity with undiminished interest; the *Saturnalia* still appear in the *Calendar* of 354.⁵² The associated functions of this temple, among other, as *aerarium Saturni*, were of particular importance.⁵³

The temple was founded in the archaic period; two restorations or rebuildings of the architecture are attested in the archaeological, literary, and epigraphic evidence.⁵⁴ The temple in its present state results from a third—the last—large-scale restoration, carried out in Late Antiquity. Again, this is a hexastyle temple, of Ionic order. While the podium itself originates from the precedent building, the rising structure, comprised of the six frontal columns and one on each side respectively, the entablature and the tympanum are from

51 Actually, it is one of the oldest cults in the entire city itself; even more, being the guarantor of wealth and prosperity, this god was constituent for the city and the civilization.

52 Degraasi (1963) 538–540.

53 Köb (2000) 72 n. 272; Köb (2000) 73–76 on the associated functions of this temple.

54 On the temple of Saturn in general: Coarelli (1983) 202–201; Pensabene (1984); Coarelli (1999) 234–236; Köb (2000) 70–83.

the latest restoration. This restoration is well attested both by the inscription and in the material evidence. The inscription itself⁵⁵ mentions only

Senatus populusque Romanus | incendio consumptum restituit

from which we cannot deduce a precise dating. The temple is not mentioned in the Chronography of 354 among the buildings destroyed by the fire of 283: it could be any other disastrous event in the period. Nevertheless, we can date the restoration of the building: its Ionic capitals and the brickwork of the tympanum provide the evidence. The capitals belong for stylistic reasons to the second half of the 4th century;⁵⁶ the analysis of the brickwork structure of the tympanum reveals a similar, though broader time span.⁵⁷ The generous use of spolia,⁵⁸ common practice in late antique construction, also confirms this dating. In consideration of all these indications, the rebuilding of the temple, apparently approved by majority decision in the senate⁵⁹ and funded by public money, can be dated confidently into the second half of the 4th century. Narrowing down this time span any further, although often done in scholarship,⁶⁰ is not possible. As to the literary evidence, the temple is mentioned in the regionary catalogs. Macrobius wrote in retrospect about the festival celebrated in honor of Saturn, the Saturnalia. No more mentions exist in late antique or medieval sources.⁶¹

In older scholarship, the rebuilding of the temple was regarded as one of the great and last actions of the ‘pagan renaissance’ or the ‘pagan resistance’ in the

55 CIL VI 937.

56 The capitals were manufactured in Late Antiquity (dating on the basis of stylistic analysis: see Pensabene 1984), apparently specifically for this temple. The previous building, too, had Ionic capitals as can be seen on the representation on the *anaglypha Traiani*.

57 Pensabene (1984) 40–47, 151.

58 Pensabene (1984); in general on the use of spolia in late antique architecture, see Deichmann (1975); Liverani (2004).

59 We have to consider that in the second half of the 4th century there were a certain number of Christians in the senate of Rome (supposedly no majority, though).

60 In scholarship, it has been tried to narrow down this time span to the twenty years between 360 and 380, arguing that in these 20 years there was a prolific period of building activity on the pagan front. The evidence for late antique restoration or rebuilding for most of the temples cited in this context is, however, simply inexistent or not valid; it continues, though, to persist in scholarship. Pensabene (1984) 61–63. 67. 151; Bauer (1996) 138 n. 222; Muth (2006) 448.

61 At a certain point of time in the Middle Ages, the church of S. Salvatore de statera was erected in the temple's cella.

late 4th century.⁶² This view found confirmation also in the fact that the festival of the Saturnalia was still celebrated in the 4th century; furthermore, the same Saturnalia as described by Macrobius⁶³ has been cited as evidence for an ongoing interest, even more, as an increased interest, in Saturn and his cult.

The contrasting scholarly opinion to this is that there was no religious interest at all in the rebuilding of the temple. The purpose would have been the aim for the maintenance of the Forum Romanum, of the old splendor of past days, of Rome's now vanishing power and grandeur, once manifest in architectural monumentality and in traditions; at least trying to keep up appearances. The reconstruction of the temple of Saturn would have fulfilled, exactly, this secular purpose.

Neither of these interpretations of the activities, that is, of the rebuilding of sacral buildings in the 4th century, is fully satisfactory. First of all, a temple was always a public building, and was treated as such at least until the reign of Gratian. Therefore, to restore a public building, of whatever purpose, has been, for centuries, a simple and unquestioned duty of the respective officials in charge. There is no need to suspect religious zeal and an action of intense commitment. On the other hand, there is no need to deny religiousness in these activities. To consider these activities merely as aiming to maintain the traditions, as antiquarianism, or as nostalgia excludes the notion that a sacral building was still a sacral building and its restoration was, in an unquestioned way but as a matter of course, believed to be indispensable for the well-being of Rome, the inhabitants, and the empire: it was necessary for the upkeep of the good relationship with the gods, as it had been the case in previous centuries (without being interpreted as particular religious zeal in scholarship). Also and especially because of the inseparability of secular and sacral in the Roman world, the issue cannot be regarded as either/or, as the manifestation either of pure religiousness or of merely secular scopes,⁶⁴ even though the over

62 Rediscussing the 'last pagans of Rome': Salzman (1992); Salzman (2002); especially Cameron (2011).

63 On Macrobius and that he was writing in retrospect in the 5th century: Cameron (1966); Cameron (2011).

64 For the same reason, the assumption that the temple of Saturn would have been rebuilt for its associated function, that is, to serve as *aerarium* only, seems to be wrong. It had been argued that a possible reason would have been the re-organization of the *aerarium* and its transformation into the *arca quaestoria* in 384. The probability, though, is very low. First of all, a fire as reason for the necessity of a rebuilding is clearly mentioned in the inscription. Second, after having dismantled the *aerarium* of all the religious annotations, would an official administrative building really have been rebuilt with such an enormous expenditure just to house the *aerarium*, and in an appearance so much associated with

centuries unthinkable inseparability of sacral and secular spheres became, at the end of the 4th century, at least debatable.

The other large-scale cultic facilities on the Forum shall be discussed only briefly. The temple of Castor and Pollux at the southeastern corner of the Forum is, similarly to the temple of Saturn, one of the oldest temples in the Forum. For its fate in Late Antiquity there is twofold evidence, one of which testifies to the ongoing cult of these gods, the other attesting, contrarily, the physical end of the temple. While from the Calendar of 354 and other written references a continuance of the *transvectio equitum*, a ceremonial of both religious and military character with the temple of the Dioscuri in a central role, is also apparent in Late Antiquity, architectural elements of the building were reused as spolia in the adjacent precinct of Iuturna as early as in the 4th century.⁶⁵

Although there is no particular information for the late antique period on the temple of Vesta,⁶⁶ the ongoing existence of the Vestal Virgins and their service in various cults is testified to by a number of inscriptions that were dedicated to the Virgins.⁶⁷ The latest honorary statue to a Virgo Vestalis Maxima, together with its inscription, results from 385; the participation of the Virgins in various cults in general and also in festivals in honor of Vesta in particular is attested in the Calendar of 354.⁶⁸ The contribution of this goddess, her cult and the buildings related to the ongoing sacredness on the Forum occurred, therefore, on manifold levels: monumentally in the form of two large-scale objects

cult and religion? To accommodate the *aerarium* in a building of this kind is imaginable only on the assumption that it could flourish only if entrusted to Saturn—which means that there is in fact religiousness involved, and there we are again at the inseparability of religious and civic life, of sacral and secular, of religion and administration.

65 Nielsen (1993) 245; Sande (2003) 101–103. In general on the temple and with special regard on Late Antiquity: Poulsen (1992); Poulsen (1993); Nielsen (1993); Köb (2000) 41–46.

66 The latest construction phase results from after the fire in 191 AD under the Severan emperors. The frieze representing cultic equipment is of Severan manufacture, too. There is no information about the temple in Late Antiquity. Apparently, in the 8th–9th centuries, the building was in ruins, since numerous of its architectural elements were re-used in a medieval wall between the Lacus Iuturnae and the temple of the Dioscuri.

67 The Atrium Vestae itself seems to have been used for its original purpose until the end of the 4th century, with the last greater renovation in the high imperial period. There seems to be a continuous utilization of the structure also after the turn of the century till the middle ages, for a different purpose, though. Mekacher (2006).

68 On the inscriptions and honorary statues to the Vestal Virgins, see Mekacher (2006). The last inscription, to Coelia Concordia, around 385 AD: CIL VI 2145. On cultic activities related to Vesta or with the participation of the Vestal Virgins: Salzman (1990) 157–161.

of architecture, and of the visible statues of the Virgins; then, by announcing their presence and their continuance by the written word, eternalized in stone. While these elements were topographically fixed, there was also a type of omnipresent manifestation of the goddess and the Virgins: their activities were basically essential for almost every cult within the official civic religion. Thus, they were everywhere and also present at any time.

1.2 *The Small Cult Places*

The smaller cult places on the Forum Romanum were numerous, but continuous information on them until Late Antiquity is scant. One of these smaller cult places offers a prominent example to shed light on our question. Ianus Geminus' cult,⁶⁹ one of the oldest cults in the Forum Romanum, and his *sacellum* are both richly attested by literary sources and by numerous iconographic attestations on coins. Although there are no architectural remains which can be identified as this *sacellum* with certainty, we nevertheless have an idea about its appearance, thanks to the literary and iconographic evidence, most of which derives from Republican and Imperial times.⁷⁰ One of the important and also frequently stated cultic functions of the *sacellum* is related to warfare: in periods of peace, its doors were kept shut; in time of war, they were opened.

Relying on the literary evidence, a localization of this cult building at the southwestern corner of the Basilica Aemilia is, even if not certain, probable. Whereas there is no structure in the archaeological record that can be identified as the *sacellum* for sure, some rests of a brickwork structure at this very site may cautiously be considered as its remains.⁷¹ This structure is of small dimensions—which coincides with the literary evidence—and has been dated as deriving from the 4th–5th century, whereby we would have some evidence for architectural interventions or even a re-building of the *sacellum*, in Late Antiquity, supposedly after the fire of 283.

The *sacellum* of Ianus Geminus and its sound condition in Late Antiquity are attested by Procopius,⁷² who in his accounts of the Gothic war described both

69 In general: Coarelli (1983) 89–97; Tortorici (1996); Bauer (1996) 37–38.

70 Iconographic evidence listed in Tortorici (1996) 93.

71 Precisely, it is the structure of Roman brickwork incorporated into the present *casetta dei custodi*, consisting of a travertine socle zone and brickwork structure above; its dimensions are 5m x 6.5m. The identification is not certain, but probable: Coarelli (1983) 89–97. Tortorici (1996) 93. See also LaBranche (1968) 94, 154 (no. 26), without identification, but mentioning interventions in Late Antiquity.

72 Procop., *Bell. Goth.* 1.25.19–25. The event takes place in 537 AD. The bronze panels mentioned by Procopius find confirmation in the material evidence: the travertine blocks are provided with recesses that would have accommodated the panels.

the building and how a situation of extreme danger brought some Romans—having in mind the old belief⁷³—to gather clandestinely at this *sacellum* and to try to open the doors.

Usually, two possible interpretations of this episode are given in scholarship. Some see here the last champions of unfaltering pagans at work, involved in performing rituals; others deny that there is any religious motivation involved and explain the action as being within the continuance of the notion of Rome the victorious, and upholding symbolic acts tightly associated with the past glory of Rome.⁷⁴ However, neither of the two interpretations gets right to the point.

It is highly improbable that the people gathering at Ianus' *sacellum* were pagans, more precisely, the last pagans of Rome, who came together to carry out collectively a ritual act of the pagan religion. Rather, given that by the middle of the 6th century the Christianization of Rome was at an advanced stage, we may assume that it was a group of desperate Christians, who, in a state of emergency, fell back on elements of pagan ritual acts.

Procopius has a point when identifying the action in question as a religiously motivated one. This action, in fact, can be considered as an act of superstition; superstition though is a form intrinsically of religiousness. However, it is a special case, too: one of the characteristics of superstition and superstitious actions are the blurred borders: on the one hand, because it is adopted by pagans as well as by Christians and is therefore a form of shared religiousness that unifies across the borders of respective religious affiliation. On the other, it becomes—here in our example—superstition only because carried out by Christians: the once-pagan acts are, in all likelihood, executed by Christians in a particular situation, activated by specific circumstances, becoming thus acts of superstition.

In this case, we see lingering sacredness at work. First, continuance in form of superstition is one of the most pertinacious mechanisms of lingering sacredness. Then, we may assume quite positively that there was no pagan religiousness left; what was left, though, is the memory of elements, of rites, as they

73 Procop., *Bell. Goth.* 1.25.24: [...] τινὲς τὴν παλαιάν [...] δόξαν ἐν νῷ ἔχοντες [...] ("who had in mind the old belief").

74 Bauer (1996) 128; Bauer (2005) 59–61, interpreting the episode described by Procopius as the effort to '[...] das Kontinuum zu einer glorreichen Vergangenheit herzustellen'. Bauer is right when stressing that, neither regarding the episode at the *sacellum* of Ianus, nor regarding restoration of other buildings, it is a case of speaking of a 'religiöse Auseinandersetzung' (p. 59); he is not right, though, in denying religious motivation in the episode (and other evidence) whatsoever. See also Bauer (2005).

had been carried out for centuries. This remote knowledge of once-common religious behavior lingered in the collective memory and was activated in a situation of common emergency.

In immediate neighborhood of the *sacellum* of Ianus Geminus there are further small cult places on this side of the Forum.⁷⁵ We do not have evidence of any of them for Late Antiquity. However, they were there, they were present and they were visible. Even if we cannot know in which condition they were and whether they were still active, they continued, even in a ruinous state, to contribute thus to the overall landscape of lingering sacredness.

2 Synopsis

The material evidence for ongoing interest in the sacral buildings and their maintenance in Late Antiquity—for whatever motivation, as spelled out above—is not that substantial: the rebuilding of the temple of Saturn—secure evidence—and the intervention of Praetextatus regarding the statues of the *dei consentes*, attested by the inscription. The textual evidence consists of the information provided by the regionary catalogs and the Calendar of 354, and that which is dispersed in various literary texts. But even if there was no material investment in a particular temple, i.e. a kind of interest discernible with archaeological methods, it does not mean that this temple was not still in use. From the literary evidence, in fact, we know that these buildings were still existing, more or less intact, but upright,⁷⁶ and even more, that they were used.⁷⁷ We know about some festivals still taking place in the Forum in the 4th century. The latest evidence for activities regarding a pagan cult place in the Forum is Procopius' account. Later literary mentions merely confirm the physical existence of the buildings.

Procopius' account, however, is ambiguous as evidence, because it does not testify to pagan ritual being enacted within pagan religiousness. At least, though, we may state that in Procopius' time, in the mid-6th century, pagan religiousness and its individual elements each continued to persist, not only

75 Köb (2000) 15–40. Also elsewhere in the Forum area there were numerous other cultic spots.

76 This applies for the information provided by the regionary catalogs but also for the much later text of the *Anonymus Einsidlensis*.

77 This applies for the information provided by the Calendar of 354, from which we may assume that a festival still has been celebrated. If a festival is celebrated, the temple in question is in use.

in the material structures, but also in the people's minds: lingering sacredness in the form of collective memory, of still-existent knowledge about elements of pagan religion. People knew about Ianus' *sacellum*, about its purpose and also the very ancient ritual regarding the closed or opened doors. They acted *ad hoc*, but collectively, sharing the ancient (pagan cultic) *modus operandi* as a piece of the collective memory.

All in all, the image obtained of the Forum Romanum with regard to its sacral topography is very heterogeneous. This also applies to the physical appearance of the buildings, as well as to the (assumed) sacral and secular activities in or around the cult places. But, as stated above, the sacredness in the Forum Romanum was not maintained and did not persist, in Late Antiquity, by means of large scale actions and efforts, neither by brisk building and rebuilding activities. Instead, other mechanisms were at work.

The Forum Romanum is one of Rome's areas with the highest density of sacral buildings and cultic spots and therefore with highest intensity of religious sacral significance. This was generated, *inter alia*, by means of the strikingly visible, physical presence of monumental temples and the sheer ubiquity of very ancient cultic spots.

This high density of sacredness was, furthermore, intensified by additional elements, which emphasized both the meaning of the buildings and cult places and the intention as to how they should be understood: they manipulated or influenced the observer and passersby. There were the temples, but temples usually also have an inscription, which engraved both significance and sacredness onto people's minds. There were the temples, but temples usually were equipped with sculptural work, such as statues of the gods on the roofs or reliefs adorning the friezes, which augmented the visible impact on the observers or passersby. Thus, the intensive presence of the sacred, generated by monumental architecture, was intensified by additional elements; when these consisted, as on the friezes of the temple of Divus Vespasianus and the temple of Vesta, of a repetitive row of cultic utensils, the effect was even more insistent.

The emphasizing of the sacredness or of the sacral aura also works by means of associations and connotations: so much and such manifold religious content inhered in the cultic utensils that it evoked, by mere sight, when seen on temple friezes, the ritual actions themselves. The intensity of the sacred was, first of all, visually perceivable; but cognition and knowledge did the rest of the work. This was certainly due to the spatial closeness and the density of the buildings and cultic spots, but also for the manifold connections within and among the buildings, the sacredness was also virtually and literally palpable.

Even when, after the end of the 4th century, no more religious activities could be carried out, these objects themselves and the sacredness inherent in them served as substitutes and as *aide-mémoires* for the rituals, for the priests, for the sacrifices which ceased to exist, but thus continued to do so in a virtual way, and were profoundly engraved on the people's minds and the Forum's topography.

Sacredness lingered, therefore, everywhere. In stone, between the columns, eternalized in statues and in letters—and despite the wishes of the authorities. The sacred was ubiquitous and inevitable. The Forum and also its functions and services in the spheres of public and civic life—administration, jurisdiction, and politics—were encased, permeated and saturated with sacredness. Therefore, when Theodosius I banned cultic activities, rituals and religious acts,⁷⁸ his measures could not change this. The ban could affect behavior, but it could not cleanse the Forum from the lingering sacredness. The density of sacredness lingering on the buildings, in the memorial monuments, in people's minds, on the pavement, lingering in a material and in an immaterial form alike, and persisting pertinaciously, could not be wiped out easily and in an instance.

Therefore, the Forum Romanum, given the density, the ubiquity, and the concentration of sacredness, was more deeply affected, for a longer time and also in a different way than other areas; the sacredness endured here for a longer time than in many other areas of Rome.

The transformation of the Forum occurred, basically, in four phases. First, until the end of the 4th century, the functions of the Forum and its buildings were in every respect intact, physically and otherwise; the buildings were filled with actively carried out ritual and cultic acts and therefore were refreshed and renewed in their sacredness again and yet again.

Second, after the banning of the pagan religion at the end of the 4th century, there were no actions on a large scale any more, nor in any official form either. The temple doors remained closed, but the temples stood there nevertheless. The sacredness was still present by means of the physical density of the sacral buildings, by means of the connotations they carried, and in the people's memory; the sacredness was perceivable ubiquitously.

Third, at some time in the 5th, 6th century, or later, some of the buildings were still upright, others were decaying, some had simply collapsed: the old sacredness faded out and paled. In this third phase a new sacredness, of another religion, subtly and slowly, was taking possession of the Forum,

78 Cod. Theod. 16.10.10 (391); 16.10.12 (392).

initially by means of ephemeral actions: processions and ritual actions of the Christian religion.

In the fourth and last phase the new sacredness became manifest also by means of permanent facilities: more and more Christian cult buildings arose in the Forum area,⁷⁹ at some point even within the old pagan cult buildings themselves: by now, the Forum had changed its face.

Abbreviations Used

- LTUR *Lexicon Topographicum Urbis Romae*, vols. I–V (E. M. Steinby ed.) (Rome 1993–1999).
- PLRE *The Prosopography of the later Roman Empire* (A. H. M. Jones, J. R. Martindale, J. Morris eds.) (Cambridge 1971–1992).

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79 On the first Christian cult buildings on the Forum Romanum: Bauer (1996) 62–72.

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A Few Thoughts on the Tituli of Equitius and Sylvester in the Late Antique and Early Medieval Subura in Rome

Michael Mulryan

1 Introduction

In order to understand how ‘Christianisation’ impacted on the ancient city, we obviously need to look at its effect in the spatial sphere. The most obvious manifestation of this was the appearance of purpose-built buildings for Christian congregation and worship. The focus of attention for this phenomenon in Rome has often been the large extramural basilicas built over or near the burial places of Christian heroes. However, the idea that Christianity had turned the ancient city inside-out, with its focus now at the edges in the suburbs, and no longer the (‘pagan’) civic centre, is not entirely true. Unlike many Roman cities, in the West at least, Rome was provided with several intramural basilicas for Christian use from the fourth century. These were small at first, but many were in no way hidden or marginal in their location.¹ A complex of Christian buildings just beyond the civic centre of Rome thus deserves to be discussed here.

Previous studies looking at the patterning or site choice of early Christian buildings in Rome have generally looked at the city in a macro top-down way, seeing these buildings as dots on a city plan. Yet, to fully appreciate the spatial Christianisation of the urban landscape we need to examine them at the micro street-level. The example that allows us to do this best is the *Titulus Equitii* and *Silvestri* complex, which is now below or near the ninth century S. Martino ai Monti basilica in the ancient Subura area. This region is covered by the third century Severan Marble Plan, and thus a great deal of the contemporary immediate surroundings can be reconstructed. The broader question as to how these *tituli* fitted into that urban landscape is tackled within my book (see n.1). For now it is important to establish the number, identity and precise location of the various Christian foundations relating to the current ninth century church on the site, questions which have been the subject of a great deal of debate.

¹ For more on this, see Mulryan (2014).

A brief survey of the scholarship looking at the problem is therefore worth examining here, which will allow us to come to some new conclusions as to the location of both *tituli*.

2 The Written Evidence

A major problem featured in this discussion is the question as to whether we are looking at one or two Christian foundations here: a *titulus Equitii et Silvestri*, or one whose name is interchangeable between the two; or a *titulus Equitii* and a separate *titulus Silvestri* nearby. Our main source, the *Liber Pontificalis* (hereafter LP) is the source for the confusion. The issue is: what is the nature of the sources the mid sixth century author(s) of the lives of the fourth-sixth century bishops drawing on? The life of Sylvester (314–35) describes him creating an *ecclesia* on the land or estate of a priest named Equitius near Domitian's baths (the Baths of Trajan),² and establishing it as a *titulus*, where it is still to this day (that is, the mid sixth century) known by that name.³ This rather detailed description of the land grant and its sixth century name seems quite definitive in proving that this *titulus* existed in this area from the early fourth century and that the life's author had access to a reliable archive. Later in the same *vita*, we hear of an apparently separate episcopal foundation of a *titulus Silvestri* next to Trajan's baths, although in other variant manuscripts it is also called the *Equiti(i)/Aequicii*. Even in the standard text the *titulus Equitii* is mentioned again at the end of the donation list, this time donated by the emperor, not the bishop.⁴ Duchesne believes the similarities in the donations to each may suggest that this is a case of differing manuscripts, or part of the same archive record, describing a single foundation.⁵ The synod attendee lists of 499 and 595 seem to back up the idea that this was a single foundation with an interchangeable name, with priests of the *titulus Equitii* appearing in 499 and those of a *titulus Silvestri* in 595, but never clergy from both.⁶ Equally, the LP's life of Symmachus (498–514) simply describes him constructing from the ground up (*a fundamento*) a basilica of Saints Sylvester and Martin, that is an entirely new con-

2 These baths were erroneously believed to have been built under Domitian by the Middle Ages, an idea which may stem from the work of Jerome (*Chron. ad a. Abrah.* 2105 = A.D. 89), itself deriving from the writings of Eusebius.

3 LP 1.170.

4 For the debate surrounding these donations see Hillner (2007) 225–261, esp. 230.

5 LP 1.187 n.119.

6 MGH. AA.12. 411, 413; MGH.Ep. 1.366–67.

struction dedicated to the fourth century bishop and also to Martin of Tours.⁷ Yet, a document written almost at the same time as the creation of this official life, the so-called Laurentian Fragment, as well as all subsequent references to this foundation, that is those describing the contemporary situation, expressly describe two separate buildings. The Laurentian Fragment, a small surviving part of an alternative set of papal biographies, clearly describes a church to St. Martin and another separate foundation to St. Sylvester nearby, not one single building.⁸ Equally, the far more numerous differences in the donation lists of the *titulus Equitii* and the *titulus Silvestri* in the LP cannot easily be explained away. Furthermore, the life of Hadrian I (772–95) describes the *ecclesiam beati Martini* as near to the *titulus* of St. Sylvester.⁹ Also, the Einsiedeln Itinerary, which is late eighth to early ninth century, and seemingly an eye-witness guide, describes two churches, one to St. Sylvester and the other to St. Martin as in the Subura on the same side of the road looking south.¹⁰ In the late eighth to early ninth century we hear for the first time about a *diaconia Sancti Silvestri et Sancti Martini*,¹¹ which may be, judging by the name, the institution that served both foundations. It was under Sergius II (844–47) that the older St. Martin church, presumably that of Symmachus, was found ruinous or demolished, and built entirely anew in, according to one manuscript, ‘a place not very different’.¹² This recalls the description of the rebuilding of S. Prassede by Pascal I (817–24), where this exact phrase is used and where the work involved a reorientation and redecoration on the same site as the older basilica.¹³ This would suggest that the remains of Symmachus’ basilica lie somewhere below the current Sergian church, which follows the pattern of most church rebuilds.

3 The Archaeology

The archaeology immediately around the ninth century building can also help us here in trying to identify and locate the fourth and fifth/sixth century foundations. Unfortunately, there have been no formal investigations below the church itself, although as a result of some seemingly damaging work on the

7 LP 1.262.

8 LP 1.46, 262 n.35.

9 LP 1.507.

10 Val. Zucc. 2.192.

11 LP 2.12, 41 n.64.

12 LP 2.93–94, 98.

13 LP 2.54; LTUR 4.326; Affanni (2006); Roccoli (2004).

current church's floor in 1901, it was reported that subterranean painted rooms were seen below it as well as funerary reliefs or inscriptions.¹⁴ This may suggest a Christian building, but, as we have said, it is more the fact that an existing early medieval church is above it that makes it very likely that its paleochristian predecessor, described as in this area, lies partially or completely beneath it. The high podium below the ninth century church, created with the use of large tufa blocks in four courses, also implies the remains of a structure beneath it.¹⁵

3.1 *The Roman Hall*

Other discoveries that point to earlier fourth-sixth century buildings on this site have been found to the north and south of the current church. Before tackling these we need to first examine the vexed question of the identity and purpose of the Roman hall approximately 11 metres to the west of the ninth century church, and located about 10 metres below it, and the vaulted chamber and wall of another building that lies in the space between the hall and the church's west wall. To describe it we will use the labels and terms utilised by Krautheimer in his detailed analysis of the structures in 1967 (see fig. 7.1). Many of his conclusions will be followed as well.¹⁶

The whole area consists of a six roomed hall, divided up by vaults and piers (bays D–K) whose walls imply an early third century date.¹⁷ To the west of F another room (C) was added slightly later, to the north of which was an open space, possibly a courtyard or garden surrounded by a low wall of ancient date. Above the hall was an upper floor(s), but the Carolingian and Romanesque monasteries built above it meant their traces were lost. The medieval monastery itself was destroyed in the twentieth century, which allowed some analysis to take place.¹⁸ Beyond the east wall of the hall lies a long rectangular courtyard, about 6 metres wide, framed by the west wall of a structure known as 'Building P'. This wall dates to the late third century. Sometime in the fourth century this courtyard was vaulted over and the entrance to 'Building P' in this wall was enlarged and rooms were created above this new vaulting. Around the turn of the sixth century a series of further modifications were made

14 Accorsi (2002) 562 with ref.

15 CBCR 3.108.

16 CBCR 3.97–108, 115–118.

17 It has been argued that the hall, or at least part of it, may in fact date from A.D. 131, on the basis of a brickstamp said to have been found in the area of the building: Boaga (1983) 6–7. This provenance is uncertain however. Silvagni (1912) thought that the structure was in fact a (third century) house, before it was the *titulus* of Equitius-Sylvester.

18 This can be found in Vielliard (1931).

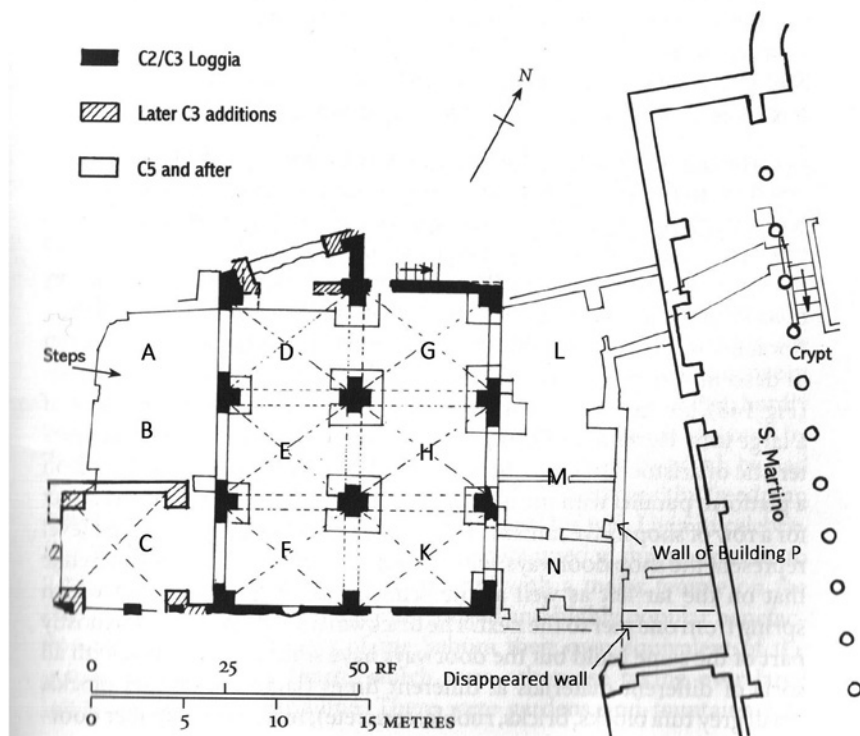


FIGURE 7.1 Plan of hall east of S. Martino ai Monti. Adapted from Amanda Claridge, *Rome an Archaeological Guide* (1998) fig. 147, p. 301 (by permission of Oxford University Press).

which are certainly of a Christian character. The two central piers of the hall were enclosed by a thick wall, with a small niche on their west side, and walls of the same type were built around the piers between the bays G–K and the now vaulted corridor L–N, the dividing wall of which was now pierced with openings. This joined the hall, the corridor and in turn 'Building P' definitively into one complex. In this corridor and on the walls elsewhere, including on the thick walls around the central hall piers, there were now paintings of a Christian character, and at the same time a niche was created in the south wall of room F with a mosaic depiction of a saint or martyr, possibly St. Sylvester.¹⁹

The interpretation of these modifications is crucial in positioning and identifying the pre-Sergian Christian buildings in the area and here we largely,

19 Davis-Weyer, Emerick (1984).

but not completely, follow Krautheimer.²⁰ The hall seems to be a commercial structure judging by its layout and utilitarian architecture and floor, and was originally, perhaps, a market or series of storerooms, an idea reinforced by the possible presence of masonry counters within it in some areas. The idea that the hall was a third century Christian meeting-place cannot be sustained.²¹ The fourth century changes here, within the rectangular courtyard to its east and to the entrance into 'Building P', could be interpreted as the first Christian interventions here, in other words to provide a covered vestibule with an impressive entrance, presumably lying to the north of room L, leading into a now equally embellished entrance into 'Building P'. It is tempting to see the west wall of this building as that of the *titulus Equitii* or *Silvestri*, but without further investigations of it we must be cautious. This building clearly changed in use and increased in importance in the fourth century, but we cannot positively identify its purpose. From the written record, it is certain that a fourth century Christian structure lies in this area, and most probably under the existing Sergian church, but that structure may well not be 'Building P'. However, the late fifth to early sixth century Christian modifications of the hall and the now vaulted L–N corridor, as well as the wall that separates them, does indicate that by this time at least, the hall, and in turn 'Building P', with the corridor linking them, was also put to Christian use. Krautheimer's idea that the hall now acted as an extended vestibule to 'Building P' rightly connects the two structures in a Christian use, but it seems more likely that the hall had now become the *diaconia Sancti Silvestri et Sancti Martini* mentioned for the first time in the late eighth to early ninth century,²² but very likely existing from the sixth, like many others elsewhere. Its insertion in a commercial storage building fits neatly into the pattern observed in many other diaconia found elsewhere in the city, a pragmatic, utilitarian decision made for practical reasons.²³

A large gem encrusted cross was painted above the vault of bay E, orientated to be viewed looking east towards H and the corridor that led to 'Building P'. This coupled with the location of the niches in the central hall piers, created with the construction of the thick walls around them, suggests to Krautheimer an entrance via a triangular vestibule north of room D, which led the visitor along the axis E–H from the entrance (see fig. 7.1) Rather than a vestibule, for me the cross informs the attendee in the diaconia the location of another Christian building or another part of the diaconia which 'Building P' may have now been.

20 See n.16.

21 Vielliard (1931).

22 LP 2.12, 41 n.64. See above.

23 This idea is shared by Cecchelli (1999) 228 n.4.

This, interestingly, diverts them from the oratory niche with the mosaic of a saint situated in the south wall of room F. We also need to factor in the possible use of the now disappeared floor(s) above the surviving hall, and those that were located above the vaulted corridor L–N. Was one being led upstairs? Did these rooms have a much earlier Christian function with the ground floor only being converted later? The date of these modifications ties in chronologically with the work ascribed in the LP to Symmachus (498–514), who builds anew a basilica to Saints Sylvester and Martin near the Baths of Trajan, or a church to St. Martin close to St. Sylvester's with the money of a Palatinus.²⁴ The list of the attendees of the Roman synod of 499 convened by Symmachus, according to Krautheimer, describes a *presb. sci. Martini tit. Aequitii* rather than just the Equitian *titulus*,²⁵ which both indicates that Symmachus must have completed his basilica within a year of the beginning of his pontificate and that it superseded the earlier *titulus* of Equitius, or both were administered jointly. Yet, this variant name does not in fact appear in any of the published versions of the list, however this is the last reference to the *titulus Equitii* in the ancient and early medieval sources, with only the *Silvestri* and *Martini* appearing after this, as separate buildings.²⁶ This suggests that the Symmachan basilica to St. Martin of Tours replaced, and was therefore most likely built over or within, the fourth century *titulus* of Equitius, and that a foundation dedicated to Sylvester was a different building next to it. The absence of presbyters of a *titulus Silvestri* in the 499 list also does not mean that one did not exist at this time. There are no priests from much larger basilicas that we know existed, for example S. Maria Maggiore, and it could be that the same presbyters of the Equitian foundation also administered the neighbouring centre dedicated to Sylvester. The earlier joint dedications of one building must be therefore a result of confusion by the papal archivists over the centuries. The reuse of several architectural pieces of sixth to eighth century date in the later Sergian church, also points to a monumental building of that date on this site.²⁷

24 See above.

25 CBCR 3.122.

26 They are mentioned together as the name of the diaconia in the late eighth-early ninth century, however, but as suggested above this may simply mean it was the diaconia of both the foundations here. The description of two foundations in the Einsiedeln Itinerary, written around the same time, shows this to be likely the case.

27 Boaga (1983) 11.

3.2 *The Archaeology Around the Current Church*

If a building under the Sergian church was the *titulus* of Equitius, perhaps 'Building P', and another or the same structure was later the Symmachan basilica, where was the foundation of Sylvester? The hall, I contend, was the diaconia, founded by Symmachus at some other time in the early sixth century, so we must look elsewhere for this other Christian building. It is now a good time then to analyse the other archaeological discoveries immediately around the current church of St. Martin.

North-east of the apse, a series of walls and columns were discovered in the late nineteenth century. In the area where the seventeenth century staircase behind the apse is found, two rectangular rooms, one of which had a row of columns of various marbles within it, were discovered around 2 metres below ground level (see fig. 7.2). Lanciani saw this as a house and where the paleochristian *titulus* was located. The walls were poorly faced and of third century type, surviving to a height of 1.6m, while above them were layers of tufa and tile fragments datable to the late 4th c. On the walls there survived some plaster from the 5th and 6th c. The bases of the columns had rounded top corners of a Lombardic type (mid sixth-mid eighth century) and there were mosaic and terracotta slab floors (see fig. 7.3) The almost complete destruction of this building was linked with the construction of the Symmachan building here.²⁸

During the demolition of the medieval monastery to the south and west of the church in the mid twentieth century, and also during the church's redecoration in the seventeenth, more discoveries were made in these areas. In the area that now corresponds to the sacristy, during the demolition of several of the walls here, on the eastern wall was seen part of a brick arch and a few blocks of tufa similar to that still visible in the cellar beneath the atrium of the church. In this area a column and a jewelled cross was also found. Walls brought to light to the south-east of the church also point to evidence for a colonnaded peristyle situated in front of its façade. These all appear to be ninth century features, however, and part of ancillary buildings of the Sergian rebuild. Nevertheless, a plan of the monastery and gardens in the nineteenth century shows a now disappeared wall (see fig. 7.1) that is the same thickness and alignment as the south wall of the third century hall, and so is likely to be a contemporary continuation of 'Building P' under the church. Other discoveries of walls in the monastery garden have now disappeared, but many of these features were believed to be part of the Symmachan basilica by the Carmelite monks who researched it, with a relic well, and its subsequent embellishment, found in the current sacristy area, believed to mark the apex of the Symmachan

28 Lanciani (1893); Accorsi (2002) 553–556.

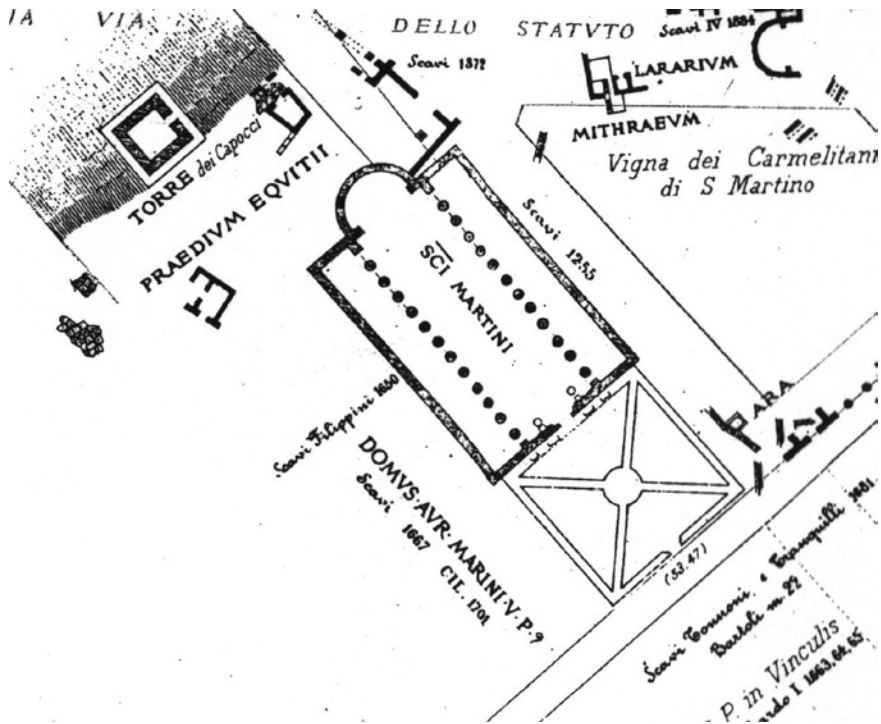


FIGURE 7.2 S. Martino ai Monti from R. Lanciani, *Forma Urbis Romae* (1893-1901) plate 23 (detail).

apse.²⁹ As these features are now lost or ambiguous (notably the columns, now lying in rooms M and N) we cannot be certain as to their date, but the photos of the last century seem to show that they are ninth century and part of the Sergian monastery complex.³⁰

The most interesting remains for identifying the *titulus Sylvestri*, therefore, are those found to the north-east of the existing church. The remains of colonnaded rooms with evidence for occupation into the early medieval period here, described above, point to a building that could still have been in use on the eve of the construction of the Sergian basilica in the ninth century. The medieval column base implies it was still in use beyond the sixth century, and therefore intact after the construction of Symmachus' S. Martino. The description we have of the building of S. Lucia in Orfea/Selci under Pope Honorius (625-38) on the Clivus Suburanus, just to the north-west, as *iuxta*

29 Boaga (1983) 542-543, 559-562.

30 LP 2.96.



FIGURE 7.3 Trench by apse of S. Martino ai Monti: August 1893 (Courtesy of the British School at Rome: The BSR Photographic Archive, Bulwer Collection, misc. 33).

sanctum Sylvestrum implies it lay nearer to it than the Symmachan basilica of St. Martin.³¹ The Einsiedeln Itinerary, written not long before the Sergian rebuild (and the demolition of both these earlier buildings), also shows that the two foundations were next to each other, further east than S. Lucia, with S. Silvestri perhaps nearer to it, and on the same side of the road as the Honorian

31 LP 1.324.

foundation.³² Remains of further rectangular rooms, just west of our colonnaded early medieval room, visible in Lanciani's plan of the city, and labelled '*praedium Equitii*' by him, between the current church apse and the medieval Torre dei Capocci, may be evidence that this building extended to around 35m in length, running south-west (see fig. 7.2), although the walls are on slightly different alignments. Lanciani dates these walls to the second century but with fourth century occupation evident, and argues for all the rooms together to be a house.³³ This I believe, is an excellent candidate for the *titulus* of Sylvester, a house/secular basilica that was converted into a Christian building in the fourth century, and continued to be so, alongside the basilica to St. Martin, built by Symmachus in the sixth century just to the south. The *titulus Silvestri* still existed in the late sixth century, with its priests attending the synod of that year, and was only demolished by the ninth century builders of the current basilica to both Sylvester and Martin. The colonnaded room found just east of the ninth century apse shows evidence for 'Lombardic' or early medieval use and redecoration, and thus its survival beyond the early sixth century and into the ninth is very possible. The apse and reliquary of the current church lie over the middle of this earlier building, which may be an attempt by the ninth century architects to respect an older relic well or sacred spot and place it at the apex of the new basilica. This may explain the excessively high tufa podium on which the Sergian church sits and its completely different alignment to any earlier structures in the immediate area.

4 Conclusion

Both the written and archaeological evidence point to two Christian centres in the immediate vicinity of the current ninth century S. Martino ai Monti. The *titulus* of Equitius is very likely to be found beneath the existing church, which was then modified by Pope Symmachus in the late fifth to early sixth century. The *titulus* of Sylvester is likely to be the colonnaded structure just north and partly below the apse of the Sergian basilica, that continued in use throughout the late antique and early medieval periods. It is clear that this part of the

32 Val. Zucc. 2.192. The idea that the *titulus* of Equitius, and subsequently the Symmachan S. Martino, should be identified with the late Roman hall building above the Roman arcades just east of the current S. Lucia (and now the convent attached to the church), is unconvincing: Apollonj-Ghetti (1961). The hall is in fact more likely to be the Honorian S. Lucia (CBGR 3.123–24), converted from an aristocratic basilica.

33 Lanciani (1893) 26–27.

Subura was well equipped for its Christian inhabitants from the fourth century, with a diaconia—surviving as the modified third century hall east of the current church—also being part of this early Christian complex.

In this way, Christianity was very much a part of the urban fabric in this part of the city, something repeated elsewhere in other neighbourhoods. The buildings discussed here may not have been large or visually prominent beyond the street on which they lay, but this perhaps emphasises how Christianity in Rome, fairly early on in its development after Constantine, moved seamlessly into ancient city life. Equally, these structures were located very near the civic centre and just east and south of the Porticus Liviae and Lacus/Platea Orphei respectively, two major landmarks and nodal points. Thus, while modest they would have been easy to find for residents and visitors.³⁴

Abbreviations

- CBCR *Corpus Basilicarum Christianarum Romae: le basiliche cristiane di Roma (sec. IV–IX)*, 5 vols., ed. R. Krautheimer *et al.* (Vatican 1937–1977).
- LP *Le Liber Pontificalis*, 3 vols., ed. L. Duchesne (Paris 1886–1892).
- LTUR *Lexicon topographicum urbis Romae*, 6 vols., ed. E. M. Steinby (Rome 1993–2000).
- MGH.AA *Monumenta Germaniae Historica: Auctores antiquissimi*
- MGH.EP. *Monumenta Germaniae Historica: Epistolae*
- Val. Zucc *Codice topografico della città di Roma*, eds. R. Valentini and G. Zucchetti (Rome 1940–1953)

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34 For more, see Mulryan (2014) 71–85.

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Four Bases from Stratonikeia: A (Failed) Attempt to Christianize the Statue Habit

Bryan Ward-Perkins

1 Introduction

One of the most striking features of the late-antique city is the gradual disappearance of the ‘statue habit’, the practice that had filled the cities of the empire with crowds of honorific monuments in early imperial times, above all to local worthies. Through the fourth and fifth centuries new dedications of statues became increasingly rare, so that they had effectively ended by the sixth. This disappearance of new statuary coincides quite closely with the gradual spread of Christianity as the dominant religion of the empire’s élite. It is therefore an obvious question to be explored, whether the rise of Christianity and the decline of statues were connected. Was the disappearance of new statuary one feature of the christianization of the city?

The city of Stratonikeia in Caria has produced four late-antique statue bases that shed some light on this question. All have inscriptions in Greek dedicated to the same man, a certain Maximos. They are interesting for a number of reasons that extend beyond the issue of the impact of the new religion. They testify to a phenomenon found elsewhere in the empire: a man who was keen to have statues set up to him, even at a time when new honorific statuary was becoming a rarity.¹ They show that there was a degree of choice in the language form used on a base, since two are in verse and two in prose; and they testify to a continuity of private munificence in Asia Minor at a date when evidence

* I am very grateful to Denis Feissel and to Ulrich Gehn, my colleague on the ‘Last Statues of Antiquity’ project, for their invaluable assistance in understanding these inscriptions, and for saving me from several errors.

1 Another man with a partiality to statues, whose honours can be followed in the ‘Last Statues of Antiquity’ database (<http://laststatues.classics.ox.ac.uk/> = LSA) is Anicius Auchenius Bassus, a governor of Campania in 379–382, who was honoured with six statues in five different cities of his province, with further ones in Rome and Gortyna (Crete): LSA 326, 1683, 1729, 1730, 1848, 2034, 1354 (Rome), 1775 (Gortyna).

for this is rare in other parts of the empire.² Furthermore, one of the inscriptions (Inscription 4) is from an exceptional group of bases—those found with statues close by, that may once have stood on them.³

They have also been very thoroughly published and discussed.⁴ However none of the publications have dwelt in detail on a particular aspect of their content: their attempt to couch the traditional practice of erecting statues to benefactors in the new language of Christianity. They represent, I believe, a serious attempt to ‘up-date’ the statue habit, and draw it into the new Christian dispensation. But before discussing this, we need to have the texts laid out before us.

2 The Four Texts

Inscription 1 (= LSA 657):

Recorded by Cousin at the end of the nineteenth century in a house in Eskihisar, the village on the site of Stratonikeia; now apparently lost.

On the left edge of the block in three lines:

Μά/ξι/[μ]ος.

In the centre of the block, in three distichs, after the invocation:

Θεός ./
Μάξιμον εἰσοράαις με τὸν ἄστει καὶ ναετῆρσιν /
ἡμετέρων καμάτων πολλὰ χαρίζμενον· /
τούνεκα δ' ἡ βουλή με καὶ ἀκτέανοι πολιῆται /
στήσαν κυδαλίμαις εἰκόσι λαϊνέαις /
εὐαγέων Χρειστοῖο δόμων προπάροιθε θεοῖο, /
ὥς ἀγαθὸν τελέθει μὴ κτεάνων ἀλέγειν.

2 The best other attestation in Asia Minor is at Aphrodisias: Roueché (1989) 108–115 (2nd revised and on-line edition 2004: <http://insaph.kcl.ac.uk/ala2004/>).

3 Şahin (2008) 66–68. At the time of writing this statue is unpublished.

4 The principal publications are the following: Şahin (1982) (= Şahin, *Inschriften*); Şahin (2008) (= Şahin, ‘Recent excavations’); Şahin (2010) (= Şahin, *The Inscriptions*); Jones (2009) (= Jones, ‘New epigrams’); Staab (2009) (= Staab, ‘Zwei neuen Epigrammen’).

Translation:

Maximos.

God.

You see me, Maximos who through our toils have given much to the city and its inhabitants. Therefore, the Council (*boulē*) and the citizens without wealth (*akteanoi poliētai*) set me up in glorious images of stone in front of the sacred houses of Christ God. How good it is not to care for wealth!⁵

Essential bibliography: Cousin (1891) 429–430 no. 20; Şahin, *Inscripfen*, 166 no. 1204; Merkelbach, Stauber (1998) 221 no. 02/06/15; Jones, ‘New epigrams’, 148–149 no. 2; Staab, ‘Zwei neuen Epigrammen’, 35–38.

Inscription 2 (= LSA 1200):

Found in the gymnasium of Stratonikeia.

In eight lines of prose, set within a *tabula ansata*, with crosses in both *ansae*:

(cross) Χ(ριστὸν) Μ(αρία) Γ(εννᾶ) (cross) /
 Μάξιμον τὸν θαυμ(ασιώτατον), / δεύτερον τῇ πόλει / (cross) πανταρχήσαντα,
 (cross) / ἡ βουλὴ καὶ ὁ δῆμος, / ἀντὶ πολλῶν καὶ μεγάλων, τῇδε τῇ στήλῃ /
 (cross) ἐτείμησεν. (ivy leaf)

Translation:

Mary gave birth to Christ.

[You see] Maximos the most admirable, who for the second time held all the offices of the city. The Council (*boulē*) and the People (*dēmos*), for his many and great deeds, honoured him with this statue.

Essential bibliography: Varinlioğlu (1988) 123–124 no. 87, and Tafel 3; Jones, ‘New epigrams’, 149–150 no. 3; Staab, ‘Zwei neuen Epigrammen’, 35–38.

Inscription 3 (= LSA 1201):

Found ‘south of the main city gate’.

In eight lines of prose within a *tabula ansata*. In the left *ansa* there is a cross, in the right one a letter (N?), and above the initial letter *mu* of ‘Maximon’ a letter *tau*:

⁵ These translations are deliberately as literal as possible.

Ἀγαθὴ τύχ[η]. /

Μάξιμον τὸν εὐεργέτην, / τρίτον τὸν τετραετηρικὸν / χρυσάργυρον ὑπὲρ τῶν
παι/νήτων ἐκ τῶν οἰκίων πόνων / ἀπο(*iny leaf*)πληρώσαντα, / ὁ δῆμος ἀντὶ
μεγάλων / ἐτίμησεν τῇδε τῇ στήλῃ.

To Good Fortune.

[You see] Maximos the benefactor, who three times paid the tax in cash which is raised every fourth year (*tetraetērikon chrysargyron*), on behalf of the poor (*hyper tōn painētōn*) from his own resources; the People (*dēmos*) honoured him for his great deeds with this statue.

Essential bibliography: Şahin, 'Recent excavations', 59 no. 9 (with photo); Şahin, *The Inscriptions*, 61–62 no. 1521; Jones, 'New epigrams', 150 no. 4; Staab, 'Zwei neuen Epigrammen', 35–38.

All these scholars have followed Şahin's initial publication, and given Maximos' name in this inscription as 'Titos Maximos', interpreting the Greek *tau* over the initial M of 'Maximos' as an abbreviation of 'Titos'. However Feissel has recently, and rightly, pointed out that this is implausible at such a late date, and that none of the other inscriptions call our man anything other than plain 'Maximos'.⁶ Feissel is probably correct in suggesting that the *tau* is a Christian symbol, comparable to the crosses that proliferate on Maximos' inscriptions.

Inscription 4 (LSA 1202) (Fig. 8.1)

Found 'in the area south of the main city gate', close to a statue holding a scroll, now missing its head.

In four elegiac distichs, after the invocation:

(*cross*) Εὐτυχῶς. /

(*chi-rho*) Πλοῦτον ἔχων πάντεσσιν / ἐπήρκεσας, ὦ μεγάθυμε /

Μάξιμε, χρυσεῖς / αἶμα φέρων γενεῆς /

μοῦνος γὰρ κτεάνοισιν / ἐρύσας σείο τιθήνης /

ἀνέρας ἐξ ἀχέων / ἔκ τε δυηπαθίης. /

Οὐνεκα δὴ βαρύμοχθον / ὑπὲρ πάντων φόρον ἔτλης /

ἐκ φιλο[τι]μίας ῥηϊδίως ὁπάσ<ας>, /

τοῦνεκα σὲ στήλῃ περιώσια / κυδαίνοντες /

ζῆλον τοῖς ἀγαθοῖς / στήσαμεν ἀκτέανοι.

⁶ Feissel (2011) 526.

FIGURE 8.1 *Inscription 4, Stratonikeia (LSA 1202).*

To Good Fortune.

Having wealth, you helped everyone, great-hearted Maximos, you who bear the blood of the golden generation. For you alone, with your wealth, fostered the men of your nurse (= Stratonikeia) from sorrows and misery. Since you suffered the heavily-onerous burden on behalf of all, giving from love of honour, and readily; therefore, honouring you greatly with a statue, we who lack wealth (*akteanoi*) set you up, an object of emulation for good people.

Essential bibliography: Şahin, 'Recent Excavations', 66–68, no. 33 (with photo); Şahin, *The Inscriptions*, 66–67 no. 1530; Jones, 'New epigrams', 147–148; Staab, 'Zwei neuen Epigrammen', 35–38.

3 Discussion and Conclusion

There is insufficient evidence in any of the four inscriptions to provide a tight dating, and Maximos is otherwise unknown; however they can be dated with some confidence to the fifth century. A secure *terminus ante quem* of 498 is provided by the reference in Inscription 3 to the *chrysargyron* tax that Maximos had paid on behalf of the poor of Stratonikeia, since this tax was abolished by the emperor Anastasius in that year.⁷ The *terminus post quem* is less secure; but the bases are unlikely to date before about 390, given the numerous Christian phrases and symbols with which they are covered (Inscription 2, for instance, has no less than five crosses carved on it).

What is striking about them is the curious mix of the traditional language of secular munificence and its rewards, with the language of Christianity. Two of the inscriptions open with entirely traditional invocations to Good Fortune (Inscriptions 3 and 4), but the other two invoke God, and Christ and Mary (Inscriptions 1 and 2). The published data do not tell us whether they were found *in situ*, but Inscription 2 was discovered in the Gymnasium, suggesting that it was set up in a traditional civic context; whereas Inscription 1 tells us explicitly that it was erected in front of a church: 'in front of the sacred houses of Christ God'. This is a unique instance, amongst the more than 1600 inscriptions collected in the LSA database, of the explicit association of a statue with

⁷ *Cambridge Ancient History* XIV (*Late Antiquity: Empire and Successors AD 425–600*) 54–55, 193.

a Christian context.⁸ This was a marked break with the past, since honorific statues had traditionally been set up in purely secular contexts, above all the *fora* of cities.

Maximos' motivation to give is also an interesting mix, with novel elements within it. In Inscription 4 he is explicitly said to have given 'from love of honour (ἐκ φιλοτιμίας)', while three of the inscriptions (2, 3 and 4) describe the erection of the statues as acts of honouring, and Inscription 1 describes Maximos' statues as 'glorious images of stone (κυδαλίμαις εἰκόσι λαϊνέαις)'. All of this is deeply traditional: the benefactor seeks, and revels in, the honour he gains through his munificence. On the other hand, a different, and Christian, motivation also runs through these texts: Inscription 1 ends with the sentiment 'How good it is not to care for wealth (ὥς ἀγαθὸν τελέθει μὴ κτεάνων ἀλέγειν)', while in Inscription 3 Maximos is praised for paying the *chrysargyron*, not on behalf of his fellow citizens (which would be a traditional 'civic' gesture), but specifically 'on behalf of the poor (ὕπὲρ τῶν παυνήτων)', an act of Christian charity.

Furthermore the donors of these four statues are a curiously mixed crew, at least as they are described. Inscription 2 was erected, as was entirely traditional, by the Council and People (the *boulē* and *dēmos*), and Inscription 3 by the People (the *dēmos*) alone, which is uncommon on late-antique statue bases but by no means without parallels.⁹ Inscription 4, however, was erected by 'those without wealth (ἀκτέανοι)', and Inscription 1 by 'the Council and the citizens without wealth (ἡ βουλὴ...καὶ ἀκτέανοι πολυῖται)'. Who were these *akteanoi*, the men without wealth? It is a reasonable assumption that they were the *dēmos*, but now expressed in Christian, rather than civic terms.

All of the inscriptions therefore switch between phraseology that is deeply traditional and civic, and that which is new and Christian, sometimes with startling rapidity, as in Inscription 1, dedicated by both the Council and the 'citizens without wealth'. The precise mix may in part have depended on context. Inscription 2, which was found in the gymnasium of Stratonikeia, and so is likely to have been erected in a traditional secular setting, is thoroughly 'civic' in its wording, honouring Maximos for having twice performed all the

8 We should however note a base at Epiphaneia (modern Hama) in Syria, which, if in situ, was set up inside a church, and possibly supported a statue: LSA 878; Mango (1986) (though Mango argues against it supporting a statue). This inscription contains similar Christian language to the Stratonikeia inscriptions, praising the honoured man for 'showing mercy towards the poor folk (*penētas*) of the city'. D. Feissel suggests that this benefactor, like Maximos, had paid the *chrysargyron* for the artisans of his city: Feissel (2011) 527.

9 Examples from the Greek East are: LSA 134 (Athens), 275 (Side), 551–552 (Miletos), and 615 and 622 (Termessos).

offices of the city (though opening with an invocation of Christ and Mary, and decorated with five crosses). Inscription 1, on the other hand, which we know was set up in front of a church, is the most Christian of the four, closing with the sentiment despising worldly wealth.

These four bases are unparalleled amongst the many inscriptions recorded in the LSA database.¹⁰ They represent a serious attempt to adapt the classical statue habit to the ideology of Christianity. They are however unique, and looked at closely they show that the ancient ideal of splendidly honouring civic benefactors with statues sat awkwardly with the Christian ideal of selfless giving to the poor. Nowhere is this clearer than in Inscription 1, where Maximos' otherworldly disdain for wealth conflicts with his evident relish at being commemorated in 'glorious images of stone'.

Christianity was not responsible for killing off the ancient statue habit: there is no explicit condemnation by Christian writers of the practice of erecting statues to rulers and benefactors; and devout emperors, like Theodosius I and Justinian, continued to want statues set up to them. Indeed under Theodosius there was a revival of an earlier habit, which had lapsed in the fourth century, of commemorating, not just the emperors, but also their wives and other family members: statues were erected in several cities of the empire to Theodosius' wife, Aelia Flacilla, and to his dead parents, the elder Theodosius and Thermantia.¹¹ But the Christian ideology of giving, which in theory at least was selfless and self-effacing, did not provide fertile ground for the statue habit to flourish: the four bases from Stratonikeia, with their tentative and awkward attempts to christianize honorific statuary, illustrate this beautifully. Christianity did not kill the statue habit, but neither did it encourage it.

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¹⁰ Unless LSA 878 (discussed above in Note 9) also carried a statue.

¹¹ Statues to Aelia Flacilla: LSA 2729 (Constantinople), 2726 (Antioch), 723 and 745 (both Ephesos), 185 (Aphrodisias). To Theodosius the Elder: LSA 2730 (Rome), 2725 (Antioch), 721 (Ephesos), 1695 (Canusium), 2731 (Stobi)—the latter two both of gilded bronze and on horseback. To Thermantia: LSA 2667 (Rome).

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Pagans, Christians and Jews in the Aegean Islands: The Christianization of an Island Landscape

Georgios Deligiannakis

In this paper I am going to discuss key epigraphic and archaeological evidence from the eastern Aegean islands as a way to broach the issue of transition to a Christianised world and study the interaction of major players in this long process. Looking at pagans, Christians and Jews during the fourth, fifth and sixth centuries, I will also try to touch upon aspects of the *longue durée* history of these islands and see how the issue of connectivity can be used to describe religious change locally.

1

My first case-study concerns the capital-city of the Province of the Islands, i.e. Rhodes. Our most important source of information about the history of the city comes from rescue excavations, which because of their nature do not allow a systematic study of the material. Lavishly decorated Christian basilicas, wealthy private buildings and other finds show that Rhodes remains a prosperous city through the fourth, fifth and sixth centuries. During the third century one of the major arteries of the city was drastically remodeled into a large *cardo*, with colonnades on both sides, leading to the ancient Agora and the Lower Gymnasium. At the junction of these two streets a monumental *tetrapylon* was built.¹ A large part of the public life in late antiquity was concentrated along these two major streets and three large EC basilicas had their entrance on the monumental *cardo*. Typically, the urban landscape saw a major transformation in late antiquity that included the abandonment of traditional cult places and the erection of spacious EC basilicas in focal parts of the late antique city.² The unsophisticated nature of the archaeological material, however, does not allow us to follow this change closely, therefore I would like to turn my attention to

¹ Cante (1986–1987).

² Deligiannakis (2007) 141–154; Kollias (2000).

two verse inscriptions discovered in the city that do raise interesting questions pertinent to our discussion here.³

The first text comes from a hexagonal marble-base and reads:

Ἡρακλες, αἶμα Διός, θηροκτόνε, οὐ νυ τι μῶνος
 ἐν προτέροις ἐτέεσσιν ἀλεξικάκος τις ἐτέχθης,
 ἀλλὰ καὶ ἡμετέρῃ γενεῇ τέκεν Ἡρακλῆα
 ἐσθλὸν Ἀναστάσιον Ῥοδίων κλυτὸν οἰκιστῆρα
 ὃς σὲ καὶ ᾧδ' ἀνέθηκεν ἀριζήλοισι σὺν ἀέθλοισι.

Heracles, blood of Zeus, slayer of animals, you were not the only one who was born in previous times to ward off the evil; but our age too gave birth to a Heracles, the noble Anastasios, the famous founder of the Rhodians, who dedicated you here together with your remarkable feats.

Written in Homeric dactylic hexameters, this language is typical of honorary epigrams of the Late Roman Empire. The text tells us that the inscribed base was associated with a monument, possibly a relief panel or a statue, which depicted Heracles and his labours. Moreover, and this is crucial, on the upper cornice of the base, Giulio Jacopi, who first published this text in 1932, saw a rough graffito featuring the popular Christian tag KE BOHΘI (“Lord, help”), but no traces of this graffito are visible today.⁴ Yet we can still see a crudely incised cross on one of the front faces of the block.

Louis Robert had rightly suggested that the dedicator of the monument cannot be the emperor Anastasios (491–518), and the epithet “κλυτὸν οἰκιστῆρα” points to a provincial governor, or local benefactor.⁵ The inscription is probably dated to the fourth/fifth century. The verses of the text give no specific information regarding the nature of Anastasios’ good deeds but they are enough to assume that the monument was erected by the citizens of Rhodes to honour Anastasios who was here equated with a Heracles of a *New Age*.

A second inscribed block of a similar style and also referring to an Anastasios is reported from Rhodes.

+ Ἐνθάδε τὸν μεθύοντα καὶ ὑπνῶντα Μάρωνα
 ἤηκεν Ἀναστάσιος περιώνυμος, ἐκπροχέει δὲ

3 The two epigrams have been discussed in Deligiannakis (2008a); here they are presented again with minor amendments and additions.

4 Jacopi (1932) 208–209, no. 45.

5 Robert (1948) 177–178.

[ἀ]σκὸν ἔχων παλάμη γλυκερὸν πολυνήχυστον
 ὕδωρ +

(*cross*) Here the drunkard and slumbering Maron was dedicated by Anastasios of high repute, he pours forth sweet, very plentiful water, holding a wine skin in his hand. (*cross*)

This text is also composed in Homeric hexameters, while Christian crosses are neatly inscribed in the layout. Judging by the mythological topic used here, we can assume that the type of Anastasios' public benefaction was a public fountain. The lost relief probably presented Maron as an old Silenus and one can easily discern the playful tone of these verses, where fresh water flows from the wine skin of a dead-boozy Silenos.⁶

In spite of the strong pagan sentiment of the first text about Heracles and the mythological theme of the now lost sculptures or reliefs of both monuments, the 'Christian name' of the honorand, and the use of the cross in the second inscription, which looks contemporary, suggest that Anastasios was a Christian. Having in mind the well-attested repugnance of Christians towards pagan images, this may appear unusual. However, the appearance of traditional mythological themes in different categories of material culture from a Christian context is not at all surprising in this period. This is because until a Christian culture based on the Bible became well entrenched in the life of the Christianised world,—that was a long process whose end one can place more or less in the seventh century—the classical myths continued to be at the heart of the education and culture of the elites, pagan, Christian and Jewish.⁷ For pagans and at least many educated Christians and Jews, Graeco-Roman mythology and classical literature was middle ground, which we may today describe as *secular*. Visual arts with Graeco-Roman themes continued to be appreciated in these circles for their attractiveness, their literary and power associations, and even moral instruction. Whether and to what extent these objects were connected to previous religious acts, that is pagan sacrifices and idol-worship often determined the Christian attitude towards them. The dividing line between the devotional and secular viewing of these mythological representations was however often blurred and complex among different categories of people.⁸

We saw that Anastasios erected an image of Heracles, a traditional symbol of virtue, physical power, prodigious achievements, and talismanic power in

6 LIMC 6.1. s.v. *Maron*, 362–364; cf. Kapossy (1969) 30–38.

7 Liebeschuetz (1995).

8 See recent overviews and bibliography, see Jacobs (2010); Smith (2012) 315–318.

order to commemorate his own good deeds towards the city. The monument was probably stood in a secular urban setting and it is noteworthy that the antithesis between **past** and **present** was here craftily used for the comparison between a Christian benefactor and a pagan god. We, the Rhodians of recent times, have our own new Heracles, Anastasios.

For a close parallel let us see a contemporary fragmentary epigram from Cyprus (c. 370); written on the mosaic floor of a lavish mansion at Kourion that presents another important Christian named Eustolios being compared with Apollo, the old protector of the city, regarding a similar public benefaction.⁹

[Κουριέας] τὸ πάροιθεν [ἐν ὄλβῳ] παντὶ πέλοντας
 [δυστήνους ἐσιδῶν] ἐκ ποδὸς Εὐστόλιος
 [οὐ πατέρων χῶρ]ης ἐπελήσατο· ἀλλ' ἄρα καὶ τῆς
 [ἡμετέρας πόλε]ως λουτρά χαρισάμενος,
 [αὐτὸς δὴ τότε] ἐδίξετο Κούριον, ὥς ποτε Φοῖβος
 [ἤρχετο, καὶ] ψυχρὴν θήκεν ὑπηνεμίνην.

Eustolios, having seen that the Kourians, although previously very wealthy, were in abject misery, did not forget the city of his ancestors but first having presented the baths to our city, he then sought to take care of Kourion as once did Phoebus (Apollo) and built this cool refuge sheltered from the wind.

Here, as in Rhodes, a notable Christian is compared with a pagan god; past and present are playfully and wittily juxtaposed in order to integrate old customs and attitudes into a new context but also demonstrate continuity with the city's mythological past. In both cases, the pagan world is engaged in a relaxed manner, simultaneously appropriating but also subverting. This attitude, one may argue, is not in fact different from what Constantine and his followers were trying to do by moving pagan art to adorn the new Roman capital at Bosphorus linking their imperial rule to the glorious past of Greece and Rome.¹⁰ Moreover and in the same fashion, the widespread use of *spolia* in late antiquity in monumental architecture and the visual arts similarly aimed at a conceptual and symbolic assimilation of the pagan past.¹¹

We know that pagan statues of the near or distant past remained on display as adornments of public settings in late antiquity, occasionally enjoying the protection of imperial law on condition that they did not receive any worship. The

9 Hauben (2004); Voskos (1997) E52.

10 Bassett (2004) 75–78; Caseau (2001); James (1996); Mango (1963).

11 Liverani (2011); Elsner (2004).

appreciation of ancient works of art for their aesthetic value and association with civic pride was also shared by a significant element of Christian society.

At the other end of the spectrum, one would place the well-known epigram from Ephesus, in which a certain Demeas commemorates the fact that he himself destroyed a statue of Artemis:¹²

[δαίμ]ονος Ἀρτέμιδος καθελὼν ἀπατήλιον εἶδος Δημέας ἀτρεκίης ἄνθετο σῆμα
τόδε, εἰδῶλων ἐλατήρα θεὸν σταυρόν τε γερέρων, νικοφόρον Χριστοῦ σύνβολον
ἀθάνατον.

I Demeas have thrown down the deceiving beauty of Artemis, the demon, and I have set up this symbol of truth, honouring the god who drives away the idols. I have set up the cross, the immortal and victorious symbol of Christ.

Seen as the symbol of the most important pagan cult of the city, the image of the goddess Artemis was here ceremonially deposed and ridiculed. Two famous epigrams of the early fourth century pagan poet Palladas encapsulates both tendencies being discussed so far; the first refers to statues of pagan gods which have been turned Christian as they now adorn 'Christian' buildings, while in the second Palladas expresses his amazement at the sight of a torn-down statue of Heracles at a crossroad; "even though a god, I have learned to serve the times" the god replies to the poet.¹³ But what's more on Anastasios and the reception of traditional civic decorum and Christian classicism in late antique Rhodes?

We should now look at the graffiti, which on the first block were added after the erection of the statue, yet possibly while the monument remained in its original position. In the second block, however, the crosses were most probably incised together with the inscription. It seems therefore that in the eyes of at least some elements of the Christian community, the statue of a pagan god—dedicated by a Christian—was considered blasphemous; hence the need for the Christian markings. In contrast, the crosses in the layout of the second inscription arguably bore a positive and orderly statement of religious affiliation.

One possible explanation for these two so different attitudes is to assume that the second inscription post-dates the first. The second inscription would

¹² *IEph* IV 1351 = Merkelbach & Stauber (1998) 03/02/48; Pont (2004) 561.

¹³ *Palatine Anthology* 6.441 and 528; Wilkinson (2009) suggested with persuasive arguments that the Palladas epigrams should be dated to the time of the Emperor Constantine.

then belong to a period when the symbol of the cross came to be an official badge of public inscriptions, perhaps already in the early fifth century. The time by which the classicizing and boldly uncommitted tone of the first monument was rejected as disturbing for the city's monumental landscape and ideology cannot be specified; also, if Guillo Jacopi was accurate in his report about the position of the Christian graffito, we could also infer that the statue and its base remained intact for some time after these Christian symbols were added.

Alternative scenarios about Anastasios' religion and the interpretation of these graffiti can also be postulated.¹⁴ Yet it seems that a distinction between Christianity and paganism in order to explain the character of Anastasios and his world is not really needed here. Many contemporary sources indicate that the ideas conveyed by these texts can be viewed as neither contradictory, nor inconsistent for a learned Christian of the fourth/fifth century. These two epigrams therefore vividly illustrate the appreciation of classical culture and art in the self-representation of the late antique aristocracy and the ways that this tradition could be re-used also in a Christian context. As we have said, these texts also invite us to speak about varied attitudes regarding the pagan past over time, or across different levels of the social order. The symbolic blemishing of the statue base (and perhaps of the statue/relief itself) could represent either the attitude of a group of austere Christians close to the time the statue was erected, or a later milieu in which the treatment of 'pagan' imagery had considerably changed. A marble female head of classical style, also from Rhodes, which was carefully defaced by a large cross and the acronyms IC-XC-NHKA (?sixth century) adds to the diversity of attitudes in the same context.¹⁵ It could be seen as either emphasizing the change of attitudes over time in the city of Rhodes, or simply representing the mixed tendencies of late antique Christianity towards pagan statuary as the deposed statue of Heracles in the poem of Palladas before succinctly expresses.

2

The next case-study concerns a group of EC inscriptions from Ikaria, recently edited in the *IG* XII.6.2.¹⁶ Many of these texts copy, paraphrase, or combine

14 Deligiannakis (2008a) 154–155.

15 Lazaridou (2012) 147, no. 114 (Papavasileiou); Deligiannakis (2008a) 156–157, fig. 6.

16 Nos. 1263 (proverbial phrase discriminating against the Jews), 1264 (quotation from a sermon), 1265 (oracle of Apollo prophesying the foundation of a church of Mary and invocation of the archangel and Mary) 1266 (regulation concerning the payments of fines), 1267

passages from the Old Testament; others seem to be quotations from sermons; in another a phrase from Paul's Epistle to Titus is inserted in a regulation mentioning fines on ecclesiastical and other functionaries. There was also an oracle of Apollo where the conversion of a temple into a church was prophesized and, last but not least, a discriminatory phrase against the Jews. It is important to note that all these texts were related to the remains of a large basilica that now lies beneath the church of Aghia Eirene at Oinoe (dated to the 9th c.). I am going to focus on the last two texts first, and then move on to general observations about the interpretations of these documents as a whole.

The first text reproduces an oracle in which Apollo predicts a temple's future conversion to a house of Holy Mary.¹⁷ The oracle was obviously invented by Christians and is mentioned in a number of literary texts from the mid-5th century onwards: Theodotus of Ancyra (died before 446), John Malalas (c. 530), John of Antioch (early seventh century), and an epitome of oracles, known as the Tübingen Theosophy (c. 500), which precisely aimed to show that various pagan oracles agreed with the Christian revelation.¹⁸ Our text should be dated to the late 5th/6th c. The stone also contains a small fragment of a hymn to the Archangel and the Theotokos, which was inscribed later (in the 6th c.?) The text of the oracle in the Ikaria inscription reads:

When Apollo said [...] whose house should this be? The oracle was the following: I prophesy, do whatever is conducive to virtue and order, a single triune God ruling on high whose imperishable Logos will be conceived in an innocent (girl). Like a fiery arrow he will course through the middle of the world, capture everything and offer it as a gift to the Father. Hers will be this house. Her name is Maria.

(Incertum—epitaph and proverb or mirabilia), 1268 (probably a sermon with biblical quotations), 1264 & 1274 (Psalm quotations), 1271 (reference to martyrs). Also *SEG* (2003) 898–905; *BE* (2004) no. 520; *IJO* 11, 5a; and Matthaïou, Papadopoulos (2003) nos. 29–36.

17 *IG* XII 6, 2, 1265.

18 Theodotus of Ancyra, *Oratio in Sanctam Mariam dei Genitricem*, *PO* 19.3, no. 93 (1925) 333–334 (not associated with Apollo or a temple, but with the Unknown God and St. Paul's visit to Athens); Malalas: Jeffreys *et al.* (1986) 38; Tübingen Theosophy: Beatrice (2001) xl–xlii (chronology); John of Antioch: Beatrice (2001) xlii–xlix (he proposes Severus of Antioch, patriarch of Antioch (512–18) as the possible author of this work); John of Antioch 1.54–55 (Text: Beatrice (2001). The large number of preserved manuscripts of this oracle-anthology points to its publicity in Late Antiquity and even later: Mango (1995). For Athens, see now Kaldellis (2009) 47–53, who also makes a point for an Athenian provenance of the oracle.

In most other cases, this oracle is associated with the conversion of the Rhea temple of Cyzicus on the Sea of Marmara into a church of the Virgin Mary. With some small variants, the story is that when the Temple of Rhea was about to be converted into a church in the reign of Leo I, or Zeno, an inscription with an oracle of Apollo predicting the temple's future conversion to a house of Holy Mary was discovered. Malalas also adds that the oracle was supposedly written in bronze letters on marble and placed on the lintel over the door of the pagan temple, while in the Theosophy collection this oracle-inscription is also associated with the conversion of the Athenian Parthenon into a Christian church.

The new Ikaria inscription is the only case where this oracle is found on stone and also in a setting that seems to follow the original story of the inscribed oracle near a temple-church. It was also not discovered in an urban centre, but in the countryside, highlighting the wide publicity of this oracle as a tool for conversion. We can guess that the Ikaria inscription was carved at the time of, or shortly after, the erection of a church of the Theotokos. It seems that the church replaced a temple dedicated to a female deity and the important cult of Artemis Tauropolos that survived until at least the fourth century on the island comes easily to mind.¹⁹ This text was obviously intended to give the ideological justification for the conversion of a pagan temple into a church in the eyes of the island's community.²⁰ The use of pagan oracles to proclaim the triumph of Christianity was already vigorous in literary circles of the late 3rd and early 4th century—e.g. Porphyry's *Philosophy from Oracles*, Lactantius, and Constantine's own *Oration to the Saints*.²¹ At the same time, this block looks as if drawing upon a long tradition of putting up Apollo's texts on public squares, city's gates, and other public monuments in order to justify the restoration or the introduction of a new cult.²² We could then say that elements of a shared and troubling past, the oracles of the pagan gods, are aptly employed here as a way of using a religious past for the needs of a religious present.

The second text to discuss here is more puzzling. It contains the following phrase:

Ἀμήχανος τρόπος ὅτι ποτὲ ἀλήθειαν ἀκούεις ἀπὸ [[Ἰκαρίον]] Ἰο υ δ έ ο ν.

There is no way that you can ever hear (an) [[Ikarian]] Jew(s) telling the truth

19 IG XII 6, 2, 1281.

20 Deligiannakis (2011) 325–327.

21 Lane Fox (1986) 168–261.

22 Cf. for the use of inscriptions for the introduction of new cults, see Busine (2012).

According to the IG editors, the stone originally read *Ikarion*, but was erased and *Ioudeon* was added in larger letters.²³ If the editors' opinion is right, one would assume that the (Christian) Ikarians here retaliated for an insult, supposedly made by some Jews. Feissel argued that the word *Ioudeon* was not added after the erasure, but, according to him, the erasure was intended to give a more general meaning to the anti-Jewish maxim.²⁴

In either case, this text argues for a Jewish presence on the island, nowhere else attested, and also indicates religious strife between Christians and Jews. But why was the term *Ikarion* used in the first place? Also, what kind of building or setting could possibly receive such an inscription together with the other texts? And why did the local Christians take the trouble to cut all these texts on stone?

In the remaining time, I would like to go on with this text and propose a different reading to it that potentially places these texts as a whole in a new perspective.

Going back to the Christian community of Ikaria, we saw that it defined itself against pagans and apparently Jews. The second text also reveals a polarity between native and foreign elements of the population. One could suggest that the presence of the forged oracle of Apollo and the other biblical texts in Ikaria are linked with a Christian missionary community of non-Ikarians, which had settled on the island in order to spread the Christian faith. This conjecture seems to offer a satisfying explanation for the somehow odd use of the term 'Ikarian' here.

We often hear of Christian proselytizing missions both inside and outside the borders of the Empire that were even sponsored by the imperial authority. Furthermore, it is sensible to assume that specific Aegean islands could have harbored niches of pagan error and therefore could have become the target of a Christian mission of this kind. But before going further with these thoughts, I would like to suggest an alternative reading of the word Jew here, namely that, instead of ethnic or religious Jews, the text alludes to the presence of a local community of Judaizing Christians.

In the imperial legislation and the heresiological literature of the period, pagans, Jews and heretics were all grouped together as opponents of 'orthodoxy'.²⁵ In this context, a prominent motif to be found in this literature

23 IG XII 6, 2, 1263.

24 Feissel (2006) no. 240.

25 Cameron (2007); Dagron (1991). Also RAC 19, 130–142, s.v. *Judaizantes*. Cf. the use of the term Judas: ibid, 142–160, esp. 146 s.v. *Judas Iskariot*.

was the use of the term 'Jew' to describe apostasy from the 'Christian orthodoxy'. In view of the great christological controversies of the fifth and sixth centuries, the Jew was continuously flung as an abusive term among Nestorians, Monophysites and Chalcedonians to denote supposed Judaizing tendencies in their Christological theology. A few examples of each category will suffice.²⁶ Nestorius and Nestorians are constantly called "Jewish maniacs", even though their beliefs were not influenced in the least by Jewish doctrines;²⁷ at the Council of Chalcedon (451) the Egyptian bishops shouted referring the bishop Theodore of Cyrhus and supporter of Nestorius "Μὴ λέγετε αὐτὸν ἐπίσκοπον, οὐκ ἐστὶν ἐπίσκοπος. οὐκ ἐστὶν ἐπίσκοπος. τὸν θεομάχον ἔξω βάλε. τὸν Ἰουδαῖον ἔξω βάλε", while at the same Council the clerics of Constantinople referring to the opposing Dioscuros of Alexandria were crying "Ὁ κοινωνῶν Διοσκορῶι Ἰουδαῖός ἐστιν".²⁸ The same use and meaning of the word Jew was even more prominent in the polemical works of Monophysites and Chalcedonians. For the theologian and Monophysite saint Severus of Antioch, Nestorians, Chalcedonians, Sabbellians and the supporters of the Henoticon of Leo were all heretics and 'Jewish' in nature.²⁹

For the Christian heresiologists, Judaism presented a proto-heresy and the model of all later distortions of the Christian theology. Above that, we know of Christian groups which were indeed attracted by Jewish forms of worship and cult practices (e.g. Novatians, Sabbatians, Montanists, Quatrodecumani); and, as we realize by looking at contemporary sources, they presented a serious challenge to the official Church.³⁰ Is it then possible to read the Ikarian inscription as an insult against, instead of Jews, local Christians by an 'orthodox' Christian community settled on Ikaria to preach the correct version of the Truth of God? Could the word ἀλλήθειαν in the text be understood in a theological sense?

It is noteworthy that the presence of Monophysite clergy, monks and missionaries in the region is well attested (e.g. Rhodes, Mytilene, Tralles, Ephesus, Smyrna, Pergamum, Aphrodisias).³¹ In particular, we hear that the Monophysite

26 For a collection of related sources, see Parkes (1934) 300–303.

27 Justn. *Nov.* 517, 29; 541, 30; Justn. *monoph.* 1, 15, 153, 22; 199, 7; Ephraim Theol., *Capita* 12.262. cf. Nestorius at the Council of Ephesus and later Councils was also called "the new Judas": *ACO* 1, 1, 1, 2, 64, 8.

28 *ACO* 2, 1, 1, 70, 10–13; 2, 1, 2, 83, 37–38; 3, 74, 31.

29 *PO* IV, 629–30, 655, 680; *PO* IV 80; *PO* XII, 321. See also Pauline, Hayward (2004) 12, 71, 167.

30 Mitchell (2005) 223: "The judaizing Christianity of the Montanists, the Novatians and other groups, especially in Asia Minor, represented a serious alternative to mainstream doctrines favoured by the orthodox hierarchy".

31 Deligiannakis (forthcoming).

bishop of Chios had joined John of Ephesus in his state-sponsored campaigns in the mid-sixth century against pagans and heretics in the provinces of western Asia Minor and a *xenodocheion* for banished Monophysites was established on Chios by the empress Theodora;³² these missionary campaigns included the razing of pagan temples and the erection of churches and monasteries on the same sites, but they were also turned against heretics.³³

But where could these inscriptions have stood? How can these inscriptions be seen in terms of religious topography? Biblical passages and famous maxims are sporadically reported in Christian epigraphic collections from various places, yet their historical contexts and their function as part of architectural decoration or other, remains almost always obscure, with the exception of mosaic inscriptions and *dipinti*. The lack of evidence for their original settings in the case of stone inscriptions and their widespread recycling hinder the scholars from viewing these texts as components of public monuments intended to bear specific messages to the viewer, but it is clear that a good number of these texts come as well from ecclesiastical buildings.³⁴

One can recognize here perhaps a new category of epigraphic texts, seeing them as another component of Christian imagery next to frescoes, mosaics and liturgical minor arts to be found in church decoration. This new feature should be understood as a direct product of the idea of the sacred book and the sublime authority of patristic literature as sources of theological truth and moral guide. The large rectangular block of the last inscription with holes of iron clamps on either side was probably part of a building's masonry. And that the Ikarian texts prominently stood, in relation to, or as part of decoration of, ecclesiastical buildings seems here quite plausible.³⁵ Were they a parish church, a monastic establishment, or a pilgrimage site?

The archaeological context of these texts is not known to us.³⁶ It is perhaps useful to say that regulations and sermon quotations on stone have sometimes been associated with monastic communities.³⁷ If this was the case here, our

32 PO 19.2, 161–162 [507–508]; Destephen (2008), *Ióannès* 43, 493–494.

33 Cf. Flusin (2010).

34 Breytenbach (2012); Feissel (1984) 225–227.

35 Cf. the marble block with the quotation of Ps. 75, 12 (IG XII 6, 1274) which was later inserted in the apse wall of the church of Aghia Eirene.

36 They were either used as *spolia* in the later church of Aghia Eirene, or inserted in modern houses.

37 SEG 27 (1977) 848 (catalogue of edifying biblical examples and instructions about human behavior, moral sermons? fifth/sixth c.); ciegl.classics.ox.ac.uk/html/webposters/54_Mitchell.pdf (S. Mitchell, “The Greek and Latin Inscriptions from Ankara”) (two more sermons from Ankara, unpublished); Ferrua (1991) no. 364 (*dipinto* from a wall of a

picture may be seen to follow closely the story told by John Ephesus in his *Ecclesiastical History* about a major monastery built by Monophysite missionaries on the site of a pagan temple at the village of Derida in the territory of Tralles, in which the growing power of the monastery soon caused a serious dispute between the local bishop and some monks.³⁸ I would therefore conclude that beside the continuity in the female deity and locality, and the use of the pagan oracular authority, the dynamic of rival Christian groups being in competition with each other over the proselytism of the unholy, was yet another component of the Christianisation process in Ikaria.

3

At the beginning of his well-known travel-book on Mani Peninsula, Sir Patrick Leigh Fermor (1915–2011) was astonished when the local Spartans informed him that the isolated villagers of Anavryti and Trypi on top of the Taygetus mountains were Jews. The kind of answers he got to his persistent questions were like this of the local priest: “They speak Greek like the rest of us. When Holy St Nikon the Penitent, the apostle of the Laconians, converted our ancestors to Christianity, these people were living in the plain. They took refuge up in the goat-rocks, and have lived there ever since. They go to church, they take the sacraments. They are good people but they are Jews all right.” The bank manager of Sparta added “they all say they are Jews but nobody knows why, or where they are from. It’s probably rubbish.” Leigh Fermor remained puzzled, whereas he supplied his reader with historical information about foregone Jewish presence in Greece and the Peloponnese.³⁹ It is clear though that this joke about Jews among Laconian peasants was nothing more than an expression of local chauvinism mixed with traditional anti-Semitism set in a proverbially isolated part of southern Greece. No doubt, this amusing story makes us think of the range of nuances and ambiguities of the past that often remain

monastery in Egyptian Thebes presenting an anti-Arian letter of Saint Athanasius to the monks in Greek, fourth century); Crum (1926) 331–341 and Lucchesi (2010) (a series of dogmatic texts, among which of Severus of Antioch and Cyril of Alexandria, in Coptic written on the walls of the monastery of Epiphanius in Dayr al-Bahir, near Thebes); see a similar text on a wooden tablet also from Dayr al-Bahir: Lucchesi (2010) 296, n. 4 with bibliography; Bandy (1970) no. 22 (regulation or other regarding a monastery), 59 (regulatory concerning a monastery?).

38 For a brief overview, see Trombley (1985) 329–337.

39 Leigh Fermor (1958) 1–11.

impenetrable to us. In our discussion it nicely introduces the element of geographical isolation as a way to make sense of our evidence. Could this aspect then be the right framework to contextualize our evidence about the limits of Christianisation in an island landscape?

The history of the sea and its islands has always been connected to the concept of insularity. It can be understood on the one hand, as an indication of isolation and the location of the extraordinary, and on the other as a complex reality of connectivity and networks of interaction. Both these aspects are well attested in our sources. Recent studies however agree that although isolation is a important feature of insular life for specific islands in specific periods of time, there is an aggregate tendency towards connectivity that mostly characterize the complex interdependent world of the Aegean archipelago through time.⁴⁰ The history of the eastern Aegean islands in late antiquity provides enough ammunition to this theory.

My archaeological survey has shown that the eastern Aegean region in late antiquity was marked by demographic growth and dispersed settlement accompanied by the intensive cultivation of land. Region-specific political initiatives along with empire-wide policies gave these islands a significant role in the maritime exchange system, which was the driving force of their economic expansion. Located along an expanding network of maritime exchange between Constantinople and the prosperous eastern provinces during the fourth, fifth and sixth centuries, the island communities of the eastern Aegean show evidence for high connectivity and remarkable economic growth, something that is less evident for mainland Greece and the Cyclades. Their major importance for the imperial authority was the provision of vessels and crews for the imperial-commandeered transports of goods from abroad and local agricultural products.⁴¹

Taking a broader chronological perspective, one can recall several examples of otherwise unprivileged places in terms of natural resources which managed to achieve in different periods significant demographic and economic growth by using their large fleets to transport goods between the Middle East, Asia Minor and the West: the tiny and arid island of Delos in classical antiquity for example,⁴² Patmos, Siphnos, Schinoussa and Antikaros, in the scarcely favourable political environment of the 17th century Aegean; the example of Hydra,

40 Constantakopoulou (2002) 1–28; Horden, Purcell (2000) 133–136, 224–230. Also Lättsch (2005); Brun (1996); Lemerle (1986).

41 Deligiannakis (2008b).

42 Reger (1994).

Psara, Spetzes, and Kassos on the eve of the Greek War of Independence.⁴³ As for Ikaria, an arid and harbourless island itself, it had its own heyday as a hub of monocultural production of raisins and maritime trade in the late 19th century; interestingly enough, today is mostly referred to as an earlier place of exile in the 1950s and for its modern peculiarities in the daily habits of its people.⁴⁴

So without overlooking the particular characteristics of each period, it seems that the sudden rise and fall of Aegean island communities through history has always been the result of their structural integration into an expanding network of long-distance exchange and its final disruption. It is then in this mindset that we should look at our evidence here.

Turning back to the Christianisation issue, it appears that both the ecclesiastical history as well as its archaeology show that the south-eastern Aegean islands, or at least the major ones, accepted the new religion earlier than the rest of the islands (e.g. the Cyclades). The last decades of the 4th and the beginning of the 5th c. were a watershed for the end of public paganism.⁴⁵ The islands' involvement in economic and cultural networks with their nearby continental coasts remained intense. Besides, the constant flow of pilgrims calling at the harbours of the islands and their close socio-economic interaction with the centers of eastern Christianity (Palestine, Egypt) and Constantinople had probably a significant impact on the formation of the Christian identity of these islanders. What I am trying to say is that although we cannot really know exactly when or how the local population converted to Christianity, it is possible to argue that these islanders were exposed to the influence of Christianity as much as, or even more, large parts of the mainland opposite to their shores. In fact, our evidence offers no particular reason to suggest that large parts of the islands' countryside were isolated and backwards-looking in this period. They typically show a predominantly Christianised landscape by the first half of the 6th c. The idea of marginal land has not to be associated with an island landscape only. After all, it is not the nearby islands that the bishop of Chios decided to go on a missionary campaign to convert remaining niches of paganism in mid-sixth century, but the rural areas of the provinces of western Asia

43 Patmos, Siphnos, Schinoussa and Antikaros in the 17th century: Zachariadou (2004) 199–212; Hydra, Psara, Spetses, and Kasos in 1750–1810; Symi, Kalymnos, Kastellorizo, Chalki and Karpathos in 1850–1910: Kaspersen (1966); Leontaritis (1996) 29–65; Michaelides-Nouaros (1936) 84–117; Pappas (1994) esp. 62–112.

44 Giagourtas (2004).

45 Deligiannakis (2011) 336–341.

Minor. And was not only on the island of Chios that the empress Theodora built a shelter for Monophysite refugees, but also at the heart of Constantinople.⁴⁶

I argue therefore that both Anastasios of Rhodes and the Ikarian texts can be seen as markers of connectivity, rather than isolation. Though Christians with traditional cultural tastes like Anastasios are more often to be found in the large cities of the empire, the unusual collection of texts in Ikaria could not have been created in vacuum. It could possibly mean the owning and reading of books locally, a characteristic otherwise of urban elites, whence these quotations and bricolage of texts would be extracted. From this viewpoint, the idea of a possible missionary campaign on Ikaria suggested above should not be necessarily taken to imply that Christian presence of the islands was not strong at the time these texts were inscribed. If there was indeed a monastic community there (monasteries often owned collections of books), it should be mentioned that the founding of monasteries usually characterized places where Christian culture was already well embedded in the society.

In other words, neither as a closed world of boorish islanders, nor as a favorite harbour of persecuted religious groups ('islands of heresy'), these islands were able to interact with authorized and unauthorized forms of Christianity far beyond their shores, without yet denying that traditional religious practices, whether Christian or otherwise, in some remote country areas would not have lingered for years if not centuries.

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Christian Controversy and the Transformation of Fourth-Century Constantinople

David M. Gwynn

If you desire a man to change a piece of silver, he will debate with you if the Son is begotten or unbegotten. If you ask the price of a loaf of bread, you are told by way of reply that the Father is greater and the Son is subordinate. If you enquire whether the bath is ready, the answer is that the Son was made out of nothing.

GREGORY OF NYSSA, *De Deitate Filii et Spiritus Sancti*, PG 46:557

The transformation of fourth-century Constantinople offers a unique perspective on the ‘Christianisation’ of the late antique city. Unlike Old Rome beside the Tiber, Constantine’s New Rome on the site of ancient Byzantium was not rooted in an illustrious pagan past. There were no great pagan monuments dominating the urban landscape, no entrenched pagan senatorial aristocracy. From Constantinople’s earliest days, Christianity played a defining role in the city’s history. Unlike Rome, however, Constantine’s foundation also had no traditional claim to imperial authority or to any close association with the Christian apostolic past. Constantinople’s rise to pre-eminence thus required the construction of a new civic identity befitting the status of the Christian imperial capital.

Constantinople has never lacked for scholarly attention.¹ Books and articles appear on a regular basis, and ongoing excavations reveal ever more of the surviving fabric of the city. Yet the forces that shaped Constantinople’s rise in the fourth century still merit further attention, and it is one of those forces that is the focus here. From the dedication of Constantine’s foundation in 330 to the death of Theodosius I in 395, early Constantinopolitan history was inseparably intertwined with the theological and ecclesiastical controversies that divided contemporary Christianity. During those years the city’s urban

1 There are too many works to list, although a student should still consult the older classics such as Dagron (1974) and Mango (1990a). The relationship between Rome and Constantinople has been a particular focus of recent scholarship: see Van Dam (2010) and the articles in Grig, Kelly (2012).

landscape was transformed through the building of churches, the rise of ascetic practices, the veneration of relics, and rituals and processions competing for sacred space. Clergy and monks took on increasing social roles, from the distribution of bread to the organisation of hospitals, and the bishop of Constantinople became a leading figure of the Church and the imperial court. Constantinople became defined as a bastion of orthodoxy, the New Jerusalem as well as the New Rome, an image that endured throughout the long span of the Byzantine empire.

The doctrinal debates that split the Church in the fourth century are traditionally (and inaccurately) known as the 'Arian Controversy'.² In c. 321, the Alexandrian presbyter Arius clashed with his bishop Alexander over how to define the divinity of the Son and His relationship with the Father.³ By 324, when Constantine defeated his last rival Licinius and united the empire under his sole rule, this dispute had spread to involve almost the entire eastern Church. The following year Constantine summoned the Council of Nicaea, remembered by later generations as the first ecumenical council. In the presence of over 200 bishops, the original Nicene Creed declared that the Son was *homoousios* ('of one essence', 'consubstantial') with the Father. Arius, who rejected the term *homoousios* and taught that the Son was God but not true God, was condemned and exiled and the doctrines attributed to him were anathematised.

Nevertheless, debates over the precise divinity and relationship of the Son and the Trinity continued unabated, and a wide spectrum of theological positions and creedal statements emerged. While some maintained the Nicene formula that later centuries would regard as orthodox, other influential teachings held that the Son was *homoiousios* ('of like essence'), *homoios* ('like') or indeed *anomoios* ('unlike') to the Father.⁴ The famous words of Gregory of Nyssa quoted at the head of this paper describe the theological discussions taking place on Constantinople's streets in 381, when Theodosius I summoned a new council in search of a resolution. At the Council of Constantinople, the second ecumenical council, the verdict of Nicaea was reasserted and refined. Even then divisions still remained, particularly through the conversion of the Goths and other Germanic peoples to a form of Christianity that those who defended the Nicene and Nicene-Constantinopolitan creeds viewed as 'Arian'.

2 The standard modern narrative is that of Hanson (1988), although see also now Ayres (2004) and Behr (2004).

3 The best account of Arius' career and teachings is that of Williams (2001).

4 For a convenient summary of these extremely complex debates, see Behr (2004) 61–122.

I have no intention of doing justice to the full complexity of these theological debates here. Yet certain essential remarks need to be made. The issues at stake in the controversies can easily seem unimportant to modern audiences for whom theology holds little appeal. For contemporaries those issues did matter, not only to academic bishops but to the wider population. Gregory of Nyssa, although his words are tinged with rhetoric, makes this plain. Perhaps more significantly, at least for modern scholars, the debates have exerted a powerful and deceptive influence upon our knowledge of the controversies and of the social and religious world in which they took place. Almost without exception, the literary sources that survive represent the views of those whom later Christian tradition regarded as 'orthodox'. In these sources, particularly the writings of Athanasius of Alexandria (bishop 328–373) and the fifth-century ecclesiastical historians Socrates and Sozomen who followed his lead,⁵ the debates of the fourth century are reduced to a single 'Arian Controversy'. The Church, it is claimed, became polarised between two clearly defined factions: the heretical 'Arians' who denied the Godhood of the Son and the 'orthodox' who defended the divine Trinity.

Modern scholars are now fully aware of the degree to which this polarised polemical construct has distorted our understanding of the debates and their participants. There was no group within fourth-century Christianity that can be accurately described as 'Arian', and there was no separate 'Arian church' that we can seek to identify.⁶ What we find throughout the complex period between the councils of Nicaea and Constantinople is instead a wide spectrum of differing theological positions, whose respective adherents sought to establish their beliefs as the approved teachings of the one 'orthodox' and 'catholic' Church. Only after 381 did this situation change, with the imperial legislation that enforced the decisions of the Council of Constantinople and then more significantly the emergence of the Germanic kingdoms in the West.⁷

5 For a more detailed analysis of the writings of Athanasius and his interpretation of the 'Arian Controversy', on which the argument presented here is based, see Gwynn (2007) and Gwynn (2012). Socrates and Sozomen both derived their understanding of the 'Arian Controversy' principally from Athanasius, and Socrates states explicitly that he rewrote the first two books of his *Ecclesiastical History* after reading Athanasius' works (Socrates, *Hist. eccl.* 2.1).

6 Thus Williams (1992) 102, in his review of Hanson, concluded that "the time has probably come to relegate the term 'Arianism' at least to inverted commas, and preferably to oblivion".

7 To speak of 'Germanic Arianism' is both pejorative and theologically inaccurate. The Goths and Vandals adopted the 'Homoian' doctrine that was imperial orthodoxy at the time of their conversion to Christianity, a theology that bears little resemblance to the teachings of Arius. But it is true that in their respective kingdoms separate 'Catholic' and 'Germanic'

The distortions created by the polemical construction of the 'Arian Controversy' have major implications for our understanding of early Constantinople.⁸ The middle years of the fourth century were a crucial formative period in which Constantinople's new Christian imperial identity began to take shape. Seen through the eyes of later Byzantine tradition, however, the bishops, monks and emperors of those years were regarded as 'Arian' heretics and the roles that they played in the formation of Constantinople had to be minimised or erased. When Socrates and Sozomen composed their ecclesiastical histories in Constantinople in the first half of the fifth century, a new interpretation of their city's fourth-century past had already begun to emerge.⁹ According to this new vision, Constantinople following the death of Constantine had fallen victim to heretical error, a fate from which the city was only saved by Theodosius I and the triumph of Nicene orthodoxy.

The emperor sent to command Demophilus [the 'Arian' bishop of Constantinople] to conform to the doctrines of Nicaea, and to lead the people to embrace the same sentiments, or else to vacate the churches. Demophilus assembled the people, informed them of the imperial edict, and told them that it was his intention to hold a church the next day outside the walls of the city . . . When Demophilus and his followers had quitted the church, the emperor entered therein and engaged in prayer; and from that period those who maintained the consubstantiality of the Holy Trinity held possession of the houses of prayer. These events occurred in the fifth year of the consulate of Gratian and in the first of that of Theodosius [AD 380], and after the churches for forty years had been in the hands of the Arians.

SOZOMEN, *Hist. eccl.* 7.5

Constantinople undoubtedly gained ever greater prestige under Theodosius I and his successors who made the city their chief residence and capital.¹⁰ But

churches emerged, each with their own independent hierarchical organisations. See further Wiles (1996) 40–51 and Ward-Perkins (2010).

8 For a parallel study that examines the implications of the polarised polemic for our knowledge of fourth-century Antioch and Alexandria, see Gwynn (2010) 241–251.

9 For an introduction to the fifth-century ecclesiastical historians see still Chesnut (1986) and, on Socrates, Urbainczyk (1997). Theodoret of Cyrrhus, who likewise wrote his *Ecclesiastical History* in the early fifth century, shares the same 'orthodox' tradition as Socrates and Sozomen but lacks their local knowledge of Constantinople.

10 See now Croke (2010).

the rhetoric of triumphant Theodosian orthodoxy, sweeping aside the errors of the heretics, creates the illusion of a break from the fourth-century past and a new beginning for imperial Constantinople. To understand the true significance of the formative years between Constantine and Theodosius I, we must first set aside this rhetoric of 'orthodoxy' versus 'heresy'. Contrary to modern books that still speak of fourth-century Constantinople as an 'Arian' city,¹¹ early Constantinopolitan Christianity was not divided into clearly defined 'Arian' and 'Nicene' factions. The reality was far more diverse, as were the influences that shaped the city's evolving Christian identity. Freed from the distorting lens of the polemic, it becomes possible to do justice to that diversity and to the legacy of this crucial age of transition.

One obvious yet important point should be made at the outset. Preparatory work on Constantine's new city began almost immediately after the defeat of Licinius in 324. But the city itself was dedicated in 330, a decade after the initial clash between Alexander of Alexandria and Arius. The bishop of ancient Byzantium was a figure of little importance in pre-Constantinian times,¹² and played no active part at the great Council of Nicaea. This had significant ramifications for Constantinople's later authority within the wider Church. The canons of Nicaea recognised the special status of Rome, Antioch, Alexandria, and Jerusalem.¹³ Constantinople, although under construction, could receive no such endorsement. The subsequent ecumenical councils of Constantinople in 381 and Chalcedon in 451 endeavoured to overcome that weakness,¹⁴ but Nicaea's silence was to become symbolic of Constantinople's uncertain ecclesiastical position in the years immediately following the city's foundation.

The Council of Nicaea may have failed to resolve the ongoing theological debates, but during the remaining years of Constantine's reign those debates had limited impact upon the emperor's city. Athanasius of Alexandria fled to Constantinople after he was condemned at the Council of Tyre in 335, although his appeal to the emperor failed to avert his exile to the west.¹⁵ In 336 the earliest recorded Council of Constantinople condemned another controversial

11 Liebeschuetz (1990) 163: "An Arian city"; Kelly (1995) 104: "A predominantly Arian city".

12 Alexander of Alexandria wrote a letter in c. 322 to a fellow bishop named Alexander, whom our source (Theodoret, *Hist. eccl.* 1.3–4) identifies as Alexander of Byzantium. However, the recipient is more likely to have been yet another Alexander, the bishop of Thessalonica.

13 Nicaea, can. 5–6.

14 Constantinople, can. 3; Chalcedon, can. 28.

15 On the complex evidence for this episode see Barnes (1993) 30–32.

opponent of 'Arianism', Marcellus of Ancyra.¹⁶ The most important episode to take place within the city, however, concerned the death of the heresiarch Arius himself. In a famous story originally told by Athanasius,¹⁷ Arius came to Constantinople in 336 seeking restoration to the Church. Bishop Alexander of Constantinople resisted Arius' appeals, but Arius secured the support of Constantine and the bishop reluctantly agreed to admit Arius to communion. Arius set out in procession to Alexander's church, presumably Hagia Irene the original cathedral church of Constantinople. As he passed the Forum of Constantine, he felt the need to relieve himself and "falling headlong he burst asunder" [Acts 1:18]... [and] was deprived of both communion and his life" (Athanasius, *De morte Arii* 3). The divine judgement that Arius suffered was modelled on the scriptural fate of Judas, and in the fifth century the place of Arius' death was reportedly commemorated at the rear of the forum.¹⁸

Constantinople's low profile in the controversies reflected the ambiguous status of the city itself in these early years. The bishop of Constantinople lacked authority within the Church, just as the city lacked the historical significance of the other great eastern metropoleis. Even when Constantine was baptised, just before his death in 337, it was not the bishop of Constantinople who performed the ceremony.¹⁹ Instead it was Eusebius, bishop of Diocletian's former imperial residence Nicomedia. Eusebius of Nicomedia was the chief rival of Athanasius, and while an influential figure in his own time he would be regarded by subsequent generations as the leading 'Arian' bishop of the first half of the fourth century.²⁰ The baptism of the first Christian emperor by an 'Arian' was a source of great embarrassment for the orthodox tradition, and led

16 Socrates, *Hist. eccl.* 1.36; Sozomen, *Hist. eccl.* 2.33.

17 Athanasius told the story twice, first in his *Letter to Serapion of Thmuis on the Death of Arius* (known as the *De morte Arii*), now usually dated to c. 339–46, and then again in slightly modified form in 356 in his *Encyclical Letter to the Bishops of Egypt and Libya* 18–19. All later versions of the story, from the fifth-century ecclesiastical historians onwards, derive their core details from Athanasius.

18 Socrates, *Hist. eccl.* 1.38; Sozomen, *Hist. eccl.* 3.30 (Sozomen reports that a wealthy 'Arian' eventually bought the land and built a house there in order to conceal this place of shame).

19 Eusebius, *Vita Const.* 4.62 narrates Constantine's baptism but does not name the bishops (plural) involved. Nor do Socrates (*Hist. eccl.* 1.39) or Sozomen (*Hist. eccl.* 2.34). Eusebius of Nicomedia is named, however, by Jerome, *Chronicon* 2353.

20 On Eusebius' career and theology see Gwynn (2007).

to the creation of an entire mythology of Constantine having been baptised in Rome, a myth eventually accepted as fact even in Byzantine Constantinople.²¹

Eusebius of Nicomedia had a further part to play in the history of Christian Constantinople. Upon the city's dedication in 330, Alexander as the existing bishop of Byzantion had found himself transformed into the inaugural bishop of Constantinople. Alexander can have had little preparation for the dramatic change in the nature of his see, and his hesitant role in the events surrounding Arius' death is almost his only appearance in our sources. Upon Alexander's own death in 337, shortly after that of Constantine, the see fell vacant for the first time. Conflict immediately broke out. Two rivals competed for the see: Paul and Macedonius.²²

Alexander, who had presided over the churches in that city and had strenuously opposed Arius, having occupied the bishopric for 23 years and lived 98 years in all, departed this life without having ordained any one to succeed him. But he had enjoined the proper persons to choose one of the two whom he named; that is to say, if they desired one who was competent to teach and of eminent piety, they should elect Paul, whom he had himself ordained presbyter, a man young indeed in years but of advanced intelligence and prudence; but if they wished a man of venerable aspect, and external show only of sanctity, they might appoint Macedonius, who had long been a deacon among them and was aged.

SOCRATES, *Hist. eccl.* 2.6

In later tradition Macedonius is the 'Arian' heretic (although he would eventually give his name to the heresy of denying the divinity of the Holy Spirit), and Paul the 'orthodox' champion. Paul initially gained the upper hand, but his ordination was rejected by Constantine's son Constantius II who now ruled the east. Paul was condemned and exiled to Pontus, not the last claimant to the see of Constantinople to suffer such a fate. In his place was appointed Eusebius of Nicomedia, despite the Nicene canon that prohibited the translation

21 For the evolution of the legend of Constantine's orthodox baptism, see Fowden (1984) and Lieu (1998) 136–157. By the early ninth century the chronicler Theophanes could confidently denounce Constantine's baptism by the bishop of Nicomedia as itself an 'Arian forgery' (AM 5814).

22 For Paul's controversial career see Telfer (1950) and Barnes (1993) Appendix 8. Macedonius still awaits proper scholarly investigation, despite being a far more significant figure in early Constantinopolitan history.

of bishops from one see to another.²³ At Nicaea Eusebius had signed at the head of the Bithynian bishops as the metropolitan for the region, and his translation confirmed the passing of ecclesiastical authority from Nicomedia to Constantinople. Eusebius was also remembered as the leader of a 'Eusebian party' (the so-called *hoi peri Eusebion*), and while this has probably been exaggerated Eusebius' episcopate began the gradual expansion of Constantinople's authority over the bishops of the surrounding sees.²⁴ The importance of finding a figure of sufficient pre-eminence to fill the imperial bishopric presented a challenge for the Christian emperors, and both ecclesiastical conflict and translations from other sees were to be recurring features of the Constantinopolitan church as the city's status rose.

On Eusebius' death in late 341 or early 342, the rivalry between Paul and Macedonius broke out once more. The sequence of events that culminated in Paul's final expulsion and death in 350 remains controversial, and recent scholarship has rightly highlighted that the clash between these two men concerned ambition and ecclesiastical politics at least as much as theological differences. Yet it cannot be denied that their rivalry greatly accelerated the rise of Christian Constantinople, and Macedonius' episcopate (which ended with his own expulsion in 360) saw a new emphasis on the authority of the Constantinopolitan see. In the words of Socrates, "Macedonius subverted the order of things in the cities and provinces adjacent to Constantinople, promoting to ecclesiastical honours his assistants in his intrigues against the churches. He ordained Eleusis bishop of Cyzicus, and Marathonius bishop of Nicomedia" (Socrates, *Hist. eccl.* 2.38). Setting aside the hostility of our source,²⁵ for the first time the bishop of Constantinople had established his position as the metropolitan over the Hellespont and Bithynia.

Macedonius' episcopate witnessed a number of further developments with lasting religious, social, and political implications for Christian Constantinople. The role of the bishop in those developments is rather exaggerated by the polemical focus of our sources, although the need to reinforce episcopal authority was certainly one of the factors at work. The rise in charitable care

23 Nicaea, can. 15.

24 On the 'Eusebian party' see Gwynn (2007). A number of reported 'Eusebians' supported Macedonius' appointment as bishop upon Eusebius' death, including Theognis of Nicaea, Maris of Chalcedon, Theodore of Thracian Heraclea, Ursacius of Singidunum and Valens of Mursa (Socrates, *Hist. eccl.* 2.12).

25 Socrates' text continues with a long and graphic account of Macedonius' alleged violence against his opponents, particularly the schismatic Novatians with whom Socrates had personal connections.

is a case in point. Aiding the poor and sick was a means to rally support during times of ecclesiastical rivalry,²⁶ but Christian charity had a long tradition and Constantinople's rapidly growing population led to tensions. Constantine had awarded his city a grain supply from Egypt in emulation of Rome. His son Constantius halved that allocation in consequence of the clash between Macedonius and Paul, after the general Hermogenes was lynched when attempting to enforce Paul's expulsion.²⁷ To cope with the increasing charitable demands, Macedonius' colleague Marathonius is reported to have overseen "the establishments for the relief of the sick and destitute" (Sozomen, *Hist. eccl.* 4.27). Such establishments had already existed but now reached new levels of organisation, possibly leading to the creation of Constantinople's first true hospital.²⁸ The significance of these developments is difficult to assess from our limited evidence, but marked an early stage in the association of the Constantinopolitan church with medicine and welfare.²⁹

During the same years, renewed efforts were made to provide the Constantinopolitan church with the association to the Christian past that the city had lacked. This was achieved above all through the emerging cult of relics. Later generations believed implicitly that Constantine had enclosed a fragment of the True Cross within his statue in the forum that bore his name.³⁰ It has been plausibly argued that the first human relics brought to Constantinople, those of the apostle Andrew and the evangelist Luke, were also transferred under Constantine in 336 rather than the traditional date of 356/7.³¹ Nevertheless, the 350s did see revived interest in relic veneration in Constantinople. In 356/7 the relics of the missionary Timothy were added to those of Andrew and Luke in the shrine of Holy Apostles where Constantine

26 Brown (1992) 90.

27 Socrates, *Hist. eccl.* 2.13; Sozomen, *Hist. eccl.* 3.7. Constantius' punishment of the city reduced the grain allowance from almost 80,000 measures to less than 40,000.

28 Miller (1997) 76–85. This was the Xenon hospital founded by Sampson. Miller's argument that the hospital's foundation took place under Macedonius is plausible if unproven, although Miller's attempts to associate Macedonius' activities with a particular 'Arian' interest in medicine are unconvincing.

29 See in particular the seventh-century *Miracula of St Artemios*.

30 "The emperor, being persuaded that the city would be perfectly secure where that relic should be preserved, privately enclosed it in his own statue, which stands on a large column of porphyry in the forum called Constantine's at Constantinople. I have written this from report indeed; but almost all the inhabitants of Constantinople affirm that it is true" (Socrates, *Hist. eccl.* 1.17).

31 Burgess (2003). For the older tradition, see Mango (1990b) and the still classic work of Dvornik (1958).

was buried.³² Unfortunately, Holy Apostles had apparently fallen into disrepair, and threatened to collapse after the 358 earthquake which destroyed nearby Nicomedia.³³ Macedonius supervised the removal of Constantine's remains to the nearby martyrion of Acacius for safekeeping. His actions led to a riot, another reminder of the importance such issues held among the wider population, and angered Constantius who had not given permission for Macedonius' actions.³⁴ Despite the controversy, which led directly to Macedonius' expulsion from office in 360, the accumulation of relics helped to fill what Mango aptly described as Constantinople's "vacuum of holiness";³⁵ and advanced the transformation of the imperial city into the New Jerusalem.

For the long term history of Constantinople, however, arguably the most important development of the mid fourth century was the arrival of the ascetic movement.³⁶ The earliest appearance of urban monks within the city is attributed to Marathionius, who founded a number of ascetic communities for men and women alike.³⁷ Marathionius' charitable activity has already been acknowledged, and his emphasis on ascetic welfare and spirituality drew upon the extreme teachings of Eustathius of Sebaste, whose teachings also influenced Basil of Caesarea. Appointed bishop of Nicomedia by Macedonius, Marathionius is reported to have attracted great popularity in both Constantinople and the surrounding regions.³⁸ This ascetic support strengthened Macedonius' own position, and so from its very origins Constantinopolitan monasticism was closely intertwined with ecclesiastical politics. The limitations of our sources make it impossible to trace the subsequent evolution of Marathionius' foundations, to the extent that one recent scholar could dismiss these original Constantinopolitan ascetics as a politically motivated dead end.³⁹ Yet Sozomen in the fifth century informs us, if only in passing, that at least one of Marathionius' monasteries still existed in his own

32 The *Chronicon Paschale* places the arrival of Timothy's relics in 356 and those of Andrew and Luke in 357. If Burgess is correct that the latter relics actually arrived in 336, then this is a rare instance where an event celebrated in 'orthodox' tradition was transferred in that tradition from Constantine to the 'Arian' Constantius.

33 On the complex early history of Holy Apostles see Mango (1990b).

34 Socrates, *Hist. eccl.* 2.38; Sozomen, *Hist. eccl.* 4.21.

35 Mango (1990b) 61.

36 On Constantinople monasticism see in general Hatlie (2007) and, for the later Byzantine period, Morris (1995).

37 Socrates, *Hist. eccl.* 2.38; Sozomen, *Hist. eccl.* 4.20.

38 Sozomen, *Hist. eccl.* 4.27.

39 Hatlie (2007) 62: "A political false start".

time.⁴⁰ The reluctance of the later 'orthodox' tradition to associate itself with the tainted past should not conceal the undoubted contribution of those early monks in laying the foundations for urban monasticism in Constantinople.

Throughout his episcopate and his struggles with Paul, Macedonius is branded in our 'orthodox' sources as 'Arian'. When he was deposed by the emperor Constantius in 360, Macedonius was then said to have adopted a new heresy, the 'Macedonian' error which accepted that Father and Son were *homousios* but denied the divinity of the Holy Spirit. Macedonius' replacement in Constantinople was Eudoxius, another alleged 'Arian', whose translation from Antioch to the imperial city was a further statement of Constantinople's rising prestige.⁴¹ It was at the beginning of Eudoxius' episcopate that the new cathedral church of Hagia Sophia was finally dedicated.⁴² Eudoxius also played a leading role in the Council of Constantinople in 360 which upheld as imperial orthodoxy the 'Homoian' doctrine that the Son was "like (*homoios*) to the Father who generated Him".⁴³ Such a doctrine had not previously been taught by Macedonius or earlier by Eusebius of Nicomedia-Constantinople, but this 'Homoian' creed was to prove extremely influential throughout the reign of emperor Valens (364–378) and above all through its adoption by the Goths and other Germanic peoples. Socrates and Sozomen provide very few other details of the episcopate of Eudoxius, or that of Demophilus who succeeded Eudoxius in 370. Yet we can reasonably assume that the charitable and monastic developments of the 350s continued through the 360s and 370s. The scene was set for the reign of Theodosius I and the imposition of 'Nicene orthodoxy' at the Council of Constantinople in 381.

The years between 337 and 381 witnessed a crucial transformation in the Christian identity of Constantinople. Great churches reshaped the urban landscape. The translation of relics established a link to the Christian past, the introduction of asceticism brought new ideals as well as promoting charitable foundations. The authority of the bishop of Constantinople expanded over the regions on either side of the Bosphorus and began to exert itself further afield. With the exception of Paul, however, all the leading Constantinopolitan bishops and monks prominent during these years were remembered in later Christian tradition as 'Arian'. The theological slogans that Gregory of

40 Sozomen, *Hist. eccl.* 4.27.

41 Eudoxius' career is well outlined in McLynn (1999).

42 Socrates, *Hist. eccl.* 2.43; Sozomen, *Hist. eccl.* 4.26.

43 The creed is quoted in Athanasius, *De Synodis* 30. It was in reference to this creed that Jerome famously wrote that "the whole world groaned, and was astonished to find itself Arian" (*Advers. Lucifer.* 19).

Nyssa claimed to have heard in the city's marketplaces in 381 were the catch-phrases attributed to heretics and reinforced the image of fourth-century Constantinople as an 'Arian' city.

There are two fundamental flaws with that polemical image which our 'orthodox' sources have constructed. The first, although elementary, bears repeating. The leading Christian figures of mid fourth-century Constantinople—Eusebius, Macedonius, Marathionius and Eudoxius—were not 'Arian' and nor did they share a single theological position. It is the polemical tradition that has created the illusion of a Church polarised between orthodoxy and heresy, with these men lumped together as 'Arian' because they did not hold what would become defined as the true faith. In reality, fourth-century ecclesiastical politics did not split along clear doctrinal lines, and seeking to find 'Arian' motivation for developments such as Macedonius' promotion of charity and asceticism is merely to endorse the distortions of our evidence. Between 337 and 381 Christianity in Constantinople as elsewhere was characterised by a wide spectrum of theological beliefs, and this diversity played an important role in shaping the city's religious identity.

Only after 381 did this change, the point at which image and reality collide.⁴⁴ In 381 the Council of Constantinople reaffirmed the city's status as 'New Rome' and upheld the Nicene-Constantinopolitan creed. This judgement was endorsed in law by Theodosius I who ordered that non-Nicenes must hold their services outside city limits. We cannot always assume that imperial commands were actually enforced, but in Constantinople at least we have confirmation that Theodosius' laws took practical effect. Demophilus and his congregation withdrew to the suburbs, with Gregory of Nazianzus (briefly) and then Nectarius taking over the Constantinopolitan see. When John Chrysostom in turn became bishop in 397, he discovered that the Christians now worshipping beyond the walls gathered inside the city and then marched out in procession singing hymns. Chrysostom's organisation of rival processions led to further riots, while the exclusion of non-Nicenes from urban worship was also a major factor behind the abortive coup of the Gothic general Gainas in 400. More than any other city in the empire, Constantinople reveals the tensions that surrounded the imposition of 'Theodosian orthodoxy' in the closing decades of the fourth century.

The very triumph of 'Theodosian orthodoxy' in turn underlies the second essential flaw inherent in the 'Arian' image of pre-Theodosian Constantinople. That image was created to serve the Theodosian reinterpretation of

44 For a detailed presentation of the evidence surveyed in this paragraph see Gwynn (2010) 251–260.

Constantinopolitan history, by which Theodosius I restored the true faith that the city had lost under Constantine's successors. Socrates and Sozomen, whose works are products of that reinterpretation, record the efforts made to construct a selective 'orthodox' vision of the past. The site of Arius' death was commemorated, and the story continued to be celebrated in later centuries.⁴⁵ Paul's body was brought back to Constantinople and buried in a church once held by his rival Macedonius' followers,⁴⁶ while an imperial church was built adjoining the Anastasia chapel in which Gregory of Nazianzus had once gathered his small Nicene community.⁴⁷ Monastic foundations traced their origins to the opponents of 'Arianism', such as the Syrian Isaac who foretold Valens' death.⁴⁸ New relics sealed divine approval for the Theodosian regime. The head of John the Baptist was originally discovered by 'Macedonian' monks, and the 'Arian' Valens ordered that the head be brought to Constantinople. But miraculously the relic refused to come closer to the heretical emperor than Chalcedon. There it remained awaiting the orthodox Theodosius, who completed the translation and erected a magnificent shrine to house John's head and preserve this proof of God's will.⁴⁹

Under the Theodosian dynasty, Constantinople became established as the pre-eminent city of the eastern Mediterranean and the imperial capital of a Christian Roman empire. It was an achievement of enormous significance for the subsequent history of Byzantium and of the Christian Church. Yet the construction of Theodosian Constantinople, both physical and symbolic, required that the preceding generation that separated Theodosius I from Constantine be swept aside. The expansion of Constantinople's ecclesiastical authority under Eusebius and Macedonius and Marathionius' promotion of welfare and asceticism receive only short and hostile allusions in the surviving 'orthodox' tradition. Without the efforts of these so-called 'Arians', however, the rise of Constantinople under the Theodosians, symbolised at the council of 381 by the title 'New Rome', could never have been achieved. Only if we look beyond the

45 According to the peculiar text known as the *Parastaseis Syntomoi Chronikai*, an image of Arius together with other heretics (including Macedonius) was displayed in eighth-century Constantinople as a focus for public abuse (ch. 39), while images of Alexander of Byzantium and Paul received honours (ch. 10). See Cameron, Herrin (1984).

46 Socrates, *Hist. eccl.* 5.9; Sozomen, *Hist. eccl.* 7.10 (although the latter admits that the ignorant believe the body in the church to be that of Paul the apostle).

47 Socrates, *Hist. eccl.* 5.7; on the Anastasia see further Snee (1998).

48 Sozomen, *Hist. eccl.* 6.40. Isaac the monk is assessed in Lenski (2004).

49 For the story see Sozomen, *Hist. eccl.* 7.21. Sozomen goes on to say (7.24) that Theodosius came to this new church to ask for divine blessing before he set out to defeat the western usurper Eugenius.

polarised polemic that dominates our sources can we appreciate the importance of the years between 337 and 381 for the transformation of the city of Constantine and the forging of Constantinople's Christian identity.

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Conclusions : De la cité rituelle à la communauté sacramentelle

Hervé Inglebert

La thématique du colloque “Pratiques religieuses et christianisation de la cité dans l’Antiquité tardive” est importante pour deux raisons. D’un point de vue historiographique, elle est neuve, car généralement, le problème de la christianisation est abordé au niveau des relations entre l’Empire et de l’Église. Certes, il existe depuis longtemps des monographies dans le cadre d’une province ou d’une cité¹, mais aborder la christianisation des cités comme problème restait à faire. Ensuite, du point de vue historique, cette thématique est essentielle, car les cités étaient une réalité primordiale du monde tardo-antique². Il faut donc s’intéresser aux dynamiques internes et locales, qui ne se réduisaient pas au seul impact des facteurs extérieurs, la politique impériale ou ecclésiastique imposée aux cités. Car s’il y avait bien un Empire, – parfois en deux parties –, et une Église universelle, – même si plusieurs hiérarchies ecclésiastiques ont pu simultanément revendiquer ce titre –, il existait environ 2 500 cités dans l’Antiquité tardive, dont presque un millier en Orient³, et donc autant de façon de vivre la christianisation du monde antique.

Le projet du colloque ne visait pas à discuter le terme de christianisation⁴, et insistait principalement sur deux aspects. Le premier était l’accent mis sur

¹ Pietri (1997).

² Lepelley (1979-1981) ; Lepelley (1996a) ; Liebeschuetz (2001) ; Krause, Witschel (2006).

³ Jones (1937).

⁴ Si le titre du colloque privilégiait le thème de la christianisation des cités, cela ne signifiait évidemment pas que les païens ou les juifs fussent moins intéressants, mais simplement que l’évolution religieuse majeure de la période fut que le christianisme s’imposa majoritairement dans le monde romain. Sur le thème de la christianisation, et la distinction entre les deux signification du terme, processus ou résultats, voir Inglebert, Destephen, Dumézil (2010) et en particulier l’introduction. Pour écarter les réticences à utiliser le terme de christianisation, justifiées par le fait que la notion est généralement trop mal définie pour être pertinente et utile, il faut préciser les points suivants. D’abord, la réflexion sur ce concept doit s’accompagner, afin de le rendre opérationnel, de la création de typologies thématiques (de quel item étudie-t-on la christianisation à une époque donnée ?), chronologiques (car la signification de la christianisation d’un item particulier varie selon les contextes temporels)

l'Orient romain, d'une part parce que les aspects civiques de la christianisation ont été plus étudiés pour la partie occidentale⁵, et d'autre part parce que la *polis* grecque n'avait pas la même tradition que la *civitas* latine⁶. Le second était une chronologie tripartite⁷ proposée dans l'introduction. Ceci visait à mettre en valeur l'impact de l'abandon des cultes païens et du développement des pratiques religieuses chrétiennes sur les cités.

La formule "la cité antique" peut désigner aujourd'hui des réalités diverses selon les historiens, voire selon les langues (les couples *asty-polis* et *urbs-civitas* sont mieux rendus par le français *ville-cité* que par l'anglais *town-city*) : l'ensemble des citoyens (le corps civique), les habitants de la cité (la population civique), les institutions civiques, la ville comme chef-lieu civique, le territoire civique, et enfin le fonctionnement civique non institutionnel (par exemple l'évergétisme). Aussi, les participants ont-ils développé principalement trois approches complémentaires en insistant sur le point de vue institutionnel politique et religieux ; la dimension civique sociétale ; et l'espace urbain du chef-lieu civique, qui fut abordé de diverses manières, avec la redéfinition de l'espace urbain tardo-antique, la topographie païenne, la topographie chrétienne, la dépaganisation des lieux et des rites, l'usage religieux chrétien de l'espace urbain, le lien entre la parole chrétienne, la *paideia* et l'espace urbain.

On constate que le thème du colloque fut principalement abordé via les problématiques portant sur l'espace urbain, ce qui s'explique pour deux raisons : c'est dans les villes que le christianisme l'a d'abord emporté ; et la mise

et fonctionnelles (comme le montre l'exemple du filtre adopté par Inglebert (2001) pour la christianisation des savoirs antiques). Ensuite, il faut comprendre que les processus ne sont jamais linéaires, comme le montre l'exemple du tableau présenté ici à la fin de la communication, et qu'il faut raisonner sur l'évolution de structures complexes pour intégrer les effets de tuilages. Enfin, les résultats doivent être évidemment appréciés selon les critères de la période considérée, en sachant qu'en son sein, diverses représentations étaient possibles (par exemple les discours des empereurs, des clercs, des moines et des laïcs sur la participation aux spectacles) ; mais ceci doit être pondéré par le fait que toutes n'avaient pas la même importance du fait du jeu des pouvoirs sociaux.

5 Beaujard (2000) ; Lizzi (1989).

6 Mais ce point doit être nuancé, car à la fin du III^e siècle, les institutions civiques ont été alignées sur le modèle romain et les droits locaux supprimés ; la différence fut alors beaucoup moins nette. Voir Lepellety (1996b).

7 Dans l'introduction de ce volume, Aude Busine propose de distinguer : la cité neutre, avec une coexistence de diverses communautés religieuses ; la première cité chrétienne où le christianisme avait un statut officiel et visible, mais où il ne définissait pas encore l'appartenance à la cité ; la seconde cité chrétienne, dominée par l'évêque, où la cité était désormais redéfinie comme une nouvelle collectivité religieuse.

en place du réseau paroissial rural fut longue. On peut unifier la typologie des approches de l'espace urbain proposée plus haut en s'inspirant des géographes, qui distinguent l'espace abstrait et l'espace approprié qu'ils nomment territoire. En réalité, pour les humains, sauf lorsqu'ils font de la géométrie, il n'y a pas d'espace abstrait ; il n'y a que des territoires, qu'ils s'approprient physiquement ou mentalement. La question est donc : comment est-on passé d'un territoire urbain classique, païen et profane, à un territoire urbain chrétien ?, les aspects chrétiens pouvant être définis selon les cas vis-à-vis des aspects païens ou des aspects profanes. Le fait de dédoubler la question est important, puisque cela permet d'intégrer à l'analyse les réflexions sur le *secular*⁸ de Robert Markus, qui ont été ensuite prolongées par Claire Sotinel et Éric Rebillard.

Or, on peut poser cette question dédoublée de trois manières différentes, selon que l'on s'intéresse à :

- la redéfinition chrétienne du territoire urbain. Un premier cas de figure était lorsqu'un quartier extérieur, à l'origine funéraire ou monastique, devenait un nouveau pôle urbain, comme à Rome avec le Vatican ou comme à Tours avec la basilique Saint-Martin. Un autre cas de figure était lié à la présence des cimetières et des reliques. Mais outre le fait qu'il fallut du temps pour définir les aires cimetiérales chrétiennes⁹, d'autres facteurs entraient en jeu, car indépendamment des aspects liés à la christianisation de la population, les évolutions démographiques ou celles de l'habitat ont pu entraîner aux IV^e-VI^e siècles une rétraction de l'espace urbain ou une transformation profonde du *suburbium*, comme on a pu l'étudier récemment à Vienne et Arles¹⁰. On peut alors trouver des cimetières dans d'anciens quartiers urbains désormais inhabités.
- l'appropriation physique du territoire urbain par les constructions chrétiennes (églises, monastères, chapelles, xenodochion) ; on peut parler d'une christianisation monumentale et épigraphique, qui crée une topographie chrétienne¹¹, dans ses quatre dimensions de destruction d'édifices païens, de construction d'édifices chrétiens, d'appropriation d'anciens monuments civiques par transformation ou remplacement, et de présence épigraphique. Or, ceci fut fort variable d'une région à l'autre ; ainsi, en Syrie, on trouve souvent dans des bourgades de très nombreuses petites églises de rues ou de quartiers plutôt qu'une grande basilique, ce qui crée une topographie chrétienne différente de celle que l'on peut trouver par exemple en Gaule.

8 Markus (1993) ; Markus (1994) ; Rebillard, Sotinel (2010).

9 Rebillard (2003).

10 Granier (2011).

11 Voir Perrin (1995).

- l'appropriation rituelle du territoire urbain, par l'usage qui en est fait au profit des fins religieuses chrétiennes, via, par exemple, les processions ou les pèlerinages. Dans ce cas, le lien avec le calendrier liturgique, peu abordé durant ce colloque, est essentiel. Car la conquête du temps annuel par la multiplication des fêtes chrétiennes apparaît comme un élément central de la visibilité sociale et spatiale du christianisme. On peut rappeler que dans le calendrier de 354, il existait environ 150 jours de fêtes par an à Rome, qui avait de loin le calendrier festif le plus important de l'empire. Or, avec les dimanches et les grandes fêtes chrétiennes liées au Christ et aux saints universels ou locaux, on peut penser qu'au ^v^e siècle, et dans toutes les cités de l'Empire, la communauté chrétienne, devenue majoritaire, était mobilisée, ou du moins sollicitée, environ 100 jours par an à des fins religieuses. Ceci est considérable et permettait à la fois de réaffirmer le pouvoir du clergé et de manifester socialement la présence du christianisme en affirmant sa visibilité.

Mais si la plupart des interventions de ce colloque peuvent être rapportées à une problématique urbaine, qu'il faut appréhender de manière territoriale afin de relier les deux aspects topique et spatial, on sait que de Thémistocle à Augustin, les Anciens ont toujours distingué les murs de la ville et les citoyens de la cité. Aussi, dans un deuxième temps, on peut se demander s'il y a eu christianisation non seulement de la ville, mais également de la cité. Par cité, on n'entend pas ici le territoire civique, car la dimension rurale du problème, par son importance, devrait faire l'objet d'un autre colloque. De même, il ne s'agit pas de la question de la conversion de la population au christianisme, car il faut toujours distinguer la communauté chrétienne et la cité institutionnelle, même si elles ont la même base démographique. En effet, d'une part, on avait une collectivité de droit public, de l'autre une communauté de droit privé. Et même si tous les habitants étaient chrétiens, les curiales et les clercs ne formaient pas le même *ordo*, ni n'avaient les mêmes compétences. Les curiales et les magistrats étaient des laïcs et ne pouvaient en théorie que fort difficilement devenir clercs ; et ces derniers, dans la plupart des cas, n'avaient pas une position sociale élevée qui leur aurait permis de participer à la direction des affaires de la cité.

Aussi y a-t-il eu coexistence de l'église et de la cité au sein d'une même société locale qu'elles structuraient toutes deux de manière diverse. En effet, les clercs n'ont pas cherché à christianiser les aspects institutionnels de la vie civique à des fins communautaires. La désignation des curiales, des magistrats, des prêtres des cultes païens (au ^{iv}^e siècle) ou du culte impérial (aux ^{iv}^e-^v^e siècles), le rôle civique des détenteurs d'*honores*, l'accomplissement des

munera au bénéfice de la cité ou de l'empire n'ont guère été influencés par le christianisme, ni n'ont pas été réorganisés à son profit. Tout ceci restait nécessaire au fonctionnement de la cité comme cellule autonome de gestion locale et comme rouage de l'administration impériale globale. Cela ne signifie pas bien entendu qu'il n'y a eu aucun impact du christianisme sur la vie civique. Les dépenses au profit des cultes traditionnels diminuèrent au IV^e siècle avant d'être ensuite interdites en 391-392. Et la réorientation partielle des dons évergétiques vers des dons charitables s'est souvent faite au bénéfice des églises locales. Mais du point de vue institutionnel, les choses furent plus complexes, ce que l'on comprend mieux en donnant à l'*homo publicus* deux significations distinctes : celle, institutionnelle, d'un statut public annuel ou ponctuel défini par les *honores* et certains *munera* ; et celle, sociétale, d'un rôle public assumé par un notable *privatus*, comme patron ou évergète. D'abord, dès Constantin, l'évêque était devenu un personnage semi-public du point de vue institutionnel, puisqu'il reçut dès 313 des subsides du pouvoir impérial pour s'occuper des pauvres, et qu'il fut chargé dès 318 de rendre la justice civile dans le cadre de l'*audientia episcopalis* ; et sous Anastase, il eut le droit d'intervenir dans la désignation des magistrats et des citoyens chargés des *munera*¹². Ensuite, par la gestion de la richesse de l'église locale qui s'accroissait grâce aux dons impériaux ou privés, l'évêque a obtenu de fait le statut social d'un notable et a pu en jouer le rôle public : entretenir une clientèle comme patron privé via la *matricula pauperum*, et être l'évergète de sa communauté, comme d'autres pouvaient être évergète d'un collège. Puis, selon le rapport de force local, très différent à Alexandrie ou à Baalbeck, l'évêque a pu, ou non, s'imposer comme celui qui avait le principal rôle public au sein de la cité. Enfin, principalement en Occident, son statut viager et parfois son statut social personnel d'aristocrate, surtout en Gaule, lui ont parfois permis de se présenter au V^e siècle comme le personnage public représentatif de la cité vis-à-vis des autorités romaines ou barbares, dans un contexte général devenu incertain. Au VI^e siècle, l'évêque put apparaître également comme un patron de la collectivité publique, non seulement à cause de la christianisation de la population, mais surtout parce qu'il assumait ponctuellement des fonctions qui n'étaient plus prises en charge par les cités, par exemple en organisant et en finançant le ravitaillement en blé, ou certains travaux publics concernant les aqueducs ou les murailles. Mais ceci ne fut possible qu'à cause d'un déclin réel des capacités financières des cités, aggravées par le déplacement de l'évergétisme traditionnel vers des finalités chrétiennes ou des dépenses personnelles de prestige.

12 Laniado (2002).

Ainsi, il y eut coexistence de deux pouvoirs locaux, civique (celui des notables, et ensuite au VI^e siècle, celui du comte en Occident) et épiscopal, qui ne se sont pas réellement fait concurrence, sauf peut-être dans le cas de la justice locale ; mais on sait que cette fonction était pesante pour les évêques qui, comme Augustin, désiraient accomplir leurs tâches pastorales. L'accroissement du rôle public de l'évêque du IV^e au VI^e siècle s'est fait de manière en partie indépendante de sa volonté, par décision impériale ou par le jeu des évolutions historiques régionales, – invasions, crise militaire, politique, économique, sociale ou démographique, christianisation –, qui ont affaibli l'autorité impériale et les capacités d'action collective des cités et d'intervention sociétale des notables. En effet, il ne faut pas concevoir la christianisation des cités comme un phénomène qui aurait concerné un aspect, avant tout religieux, d'une réalité stable. Les cités vers 600 n'étaient plus les mêmes que vers 300, à cause des transformations contextuelles qui touchèrent l'empire romain après 400. Les sociétés civiques ont été transformées non seulement par le christianisme (avec le rôle des empereurs, des évêques, des moines, des paroisses, du culte des saints), mais aussi par le temps qui était passé et avait apporté d'autres modifications cruciales, généralement indépendantes de lui : les transformations administratives impériales au IV^e siècle, la disparition du pouvoir impérial au V^e siècle en Occident, la fin de l'administration romaine au V^e siècle dans certaines régions comme la Gaule ou l'Espagne, l'installation de nouvelles élites germaniques, le déclin des richesses lié à la disparition du pouvoir impérial ou à la peste justinienne. Qu'il suffise de penser aux destins contrastés de Rome et de Constantinople au V^e siècle. Tous ces aspects bien mis en valeur dans les ouvrages récents¹³ ont eu des conséquences directes sur les cités, dont la disparition de nombre d'entre elles, qui ne sont pas devenues des évêchés. Inversement, l'affaiblissement de l'idéal et des institutions civiques ont permis une appropriation privée de monuments ou d'espaces publics, qui a pu bénéficier aux églises locales.

En revanche, il y eut bien un domaine civique institutionnel où l'existence du christianisme a eu un impact réel à partir du moment où il est devenu le culte de l'empereur régnant, en 312 en Occident, en 324 en Orient, et c'est celui des cultes civiques traditionnels. En effet, ces derniers, quoique juridiquement civiques jusqu'à la fin du IV^e siècle, ne furent plus collectifs de fait après 311-313, à cause de la légalisation du culte chrétien octroyée par Galère (édit de Sardique) et la liberté de culte renforcée par Constantin et Licinius (décision de Milan, connue par l'édit de Nicomédie). La signification des cultes civiques

13 Wickham (2005) ; Ward-Perkins (2005).

en fut transformée : elle restait publique au sens institutionnel, mais elle ne fut plus collective après 313/324. Les cultes traditionnels n'assuraient plus qu'un rôle communautaire religieux, même si leur dimension festive restait souvent collective, au grand dam des évêques. Ceci entraîna une neutralisation de la cité du point de vue religieux, idée bien démontrée en Afrique par Claude Lepelley¹⁴, avec deux conséquences très importantes.

La première est que les chrétiens ont tenté à partir de la fin du iv^e siècle de redéfinir la société civique à leur profit, en produisant un nouveau discours affirmant que l'église locale valait pour l'ensemble de la cité. Certes, la christianisation eut un impact réel au sein des sociétés locales. Mais la plus grande réussite des chrétiens fut, plus que la transformation du monde selon leurs principes, qui resta partielle, la redéfinition mentale globale du rapport au monde. Ils proposèrent ainsi une nouvelle histoire locale chrétienne, illustrée par Damase à Rome et imitée ensuite ailleurs, par exemple en Gaule. Mais cette représentation d'une cité chrétienne ne fut acceptée que lorsque tout le monde ou presque devint chrétien, ce qui ne fut vrai qu'au vi^e siècle.

L'autre conséquence de la neutralisation religieuse de la cité fut que, dès l'époque de Constantin, les cultes traditionnels ne purent plus assumer comme avant leurs deux fonctions civiques principales : la cohésion civique et la protection collective. Mais les rituels chrétiens ne le pouvaient pas non plus, et ne remplirent ce rôle qu'au vi^e siècle. Il faut tenter de comprendre le problème de la continuité de la cohésion sociale locale : comment est-on passé d'un modèle de l'unanimité locale culturelle et civique à celui d'une unanimité locale sacramentelle et chrétienne¹⁵ ?

Il faut d'abord rappeler que les cités étaient dans l'empire et que le contexte général était fixé par la politique religieuse impériale. On peut distinguer trois grandes phases théoriques, variables cependant selon les régions : un temps de cohabitation rituelle de 311-313 à 391-92 (la cité neutre, ou plutôt neutralisée) ; un temps de cohabitation des croyances de 391-92 à 527-529 dans un contexte dominé rituellement par le christianisme¹⁶ (la cité dépaganisée) ; un temps de chrétienté après 527-529, que l'on peut étendre en Orient jusqu'à l'invasion musulmane (la cité des chrétiens).

14 Lepelley (2002).

15 La question a été abordée dans un colloque organisé par l'université de Paris Ouest Nanterre-La Défense les 3-5 avril 2013, intitulé : "Des dieux locaux aux saints patrons dans le monde romain tardo-antique (iv^e-vii^e siècles)".

16 Certes, diverses pratiques culturelles païennes sont attestées aux v^e et vi^e siècles ; mais elles sont devenues minoritaires, n'ont plus de fonction civique, et n'ont donc plus la même signification.

L'impact du christianisme au niveau civique lorsque le christianisme devient culte de l'empereur (en 312 en Occident, en 324 en Orient) et ensuite culte prédominant de la société, après 391-392, fut réel, car il ne fut pas un culte de plus, – comme le pensait Galère –, mais un culte différent. À la différence du culte impérial, le christianisme n'a pas été inclus dans les religions civiques ; le dieu des chrétiens n'a pas rejoint les panthéons locaux. En coexistant légalement et socialement, mais séparément, avec les cultes publics traditionnels, il a mis fin à l'une de leurs fonctions, le fait d'exprimer la cohésion du corps civique¹⁷. Mais aux IV^e-V^e siècles, le christianisme n'assurait pas encore cette fonction de cohésion civique. De 312/324 à 527/529, le culte impérial, les grandes fêtes romaines, – comme celle des kalendes de janvier –, les fêtes religieuses partagées et les spectacles, encore liés aux cultes traditionnels, puis définitivement séparés d'eux après 391-92, assuraient cette cohésion civique, en partie pour des raisons locales (dans le cas des jeux liés aux cultes traditionnels avant 391-392 et dans celui des fêtes religieuses partagées) mais surtout pour des raisons romaines, c'est-à-dire liées à l'Empire et à l'empereur¹⁸. Durant cette période, la participation civique, fondement de la cité, n'était plus guère politique, – sinon à travers des acclamations lors des désignations des magistrats –, et ne pouvait plus en théorie être religieuse, ni d'un point de vue païen ni d'un point de vue chrétien (même si parfois, au IV^e siècle, tous participaient souvent aux fêtes des autres communautés religieuses, ce qui permet de parler d'une participation sociale festive¹⁹). Il restait donc avant tout les cérémonies du culte impérial et les spectacles pour rassembler les citoyens. Cette participation de type ludique, fort ancienne mais redéfinie par Auguste en lien avec le *consensus universorum* fondant le pouvoir du prince, était liée de plus en plus au culte impérial dépaganisé, mais elle s'exprimait localement, et elle devint durant deux siècles le dernier lieu de l'*unanimitas* civique. On comprend pourquoi les

17 Cette dernière était encore rappelée lors de la persécution de Maximin Daia en 312, ce qui amenait en théorie l'expulsion des chrétiens hors du territoire civique, cf. Eusèbe, *Hist. eccl.* IX, 2-4 et 7.

18 On peut penser que cela explique en partie l'idée nouvelle d'une *Romania* après 330. Alors que depuis Cicéron, la définition d'une identité citoyenne était double et articulait la petite patrie et la grande patrie, la perte du facteur d'identification qu'étaient les cultes civiques a pu perturber l'équilibre entre les deux patries et être un des facteurs, parmi d'autres en faveur d'une conception plus forte de l'empire romain compris non plus comme l'empire des Romains mais comme la patrie des Romains. Voir Inglebert (2005) 467-470.

19 Soler (2006). Cette participation festive a pu perdurer après l'interdiction des rites religieux, qui n'a pas toujours éliminé les fêtes d'origine païenne, comme le montre la persistance des Lupercales au V^e siècle à Rome.

spectacles furent si importants dans l'Antiquité tardive : ils étaient le symbole de la romanité générale et de la cohésion civique locale²⁰, ils restaient la principale occasion d'évergétisme collectif, et ils constituaient le vivant symbole de l'échec des évêques à contrôler leur communauté, puisque les chrétiens y rejoignaient les païens et les juifs, d'où leurs incessantes et souvent vaines dénonciations.

Les choses changèrent doublement après 530, en Orient, en Afrique et en Italie. La confiscation des revenus civiques qui alimentaient les spectacles et la volonté d'évangélisation systématique de Justinien amenèrent la disparition, sauf exception dans les plus grandes villes, des moyens matériels de la participation ludique, et créèrent les conditions de l'apparition d'une nouvelle unanimité locale. En effet, c'est quand la population fut presque totalement christianisée, au moins dans les villes et à l'exception des juifs, que le christianisme put, mais seulement après 530, devenir un facteur de cohésion locale structurel²¹. Les occasions liturgiques nombreuses et régulières rassemblaient les fidèles devenus très majoritaires autour de l'évêque et des saints, nouvelles figures de la cohésion collective, désormais religieuse et non plus civique. Une structure municipale administrative subsista à côté d'une communauté sacramentelle. Mais il faut au VI^e siècle bien distinguer les régions. Si en Gaule et en Espagne, les évêques et les comtes dirigeaient les cités au nom et au profit des rois, dans la *Romania*, ce furent les évêques et les notables les plus importants. Surtout, la dimension politique impériale subsista dans les plus grandes villes de l'empire romain de Constantinople autour des factions des Bleus et des Verts, et cela était encore vrai au début du VII^e siècle lors de la guerre civile entre Phocas et Héraclius. Malgré la conversion massive au christianisme et l'existence de cités à l'autonomie et à la sociabilité amoindries, ceci empêchait la réduction de la vie sociale à la seule dimension religieuse chrétienne. De même, l'existence de diverses factions religieuses, surtout après 451, pouvait limiter localement la capacité unificatrice chrétienne, même s'il fallut attendre les années 540 pour que se constitue une véritable hiérarchie miaphysite.

Mais la conversion des personnes, l'appropriation ecclésiastique de l'espace et du temps urbains et les évolutions du contexte impérial ne suffirent pas pour poser le problème de la christianisation des cités dans toute sa complexité et sa spécificité. En effet, vers 300, la *civitas/polis* désignait encore un club de

20 On en a de bons exemples à Trèves et en Afrique dans Salvien de Marseille, *De gubernatione Dei* VI, 60-79 et 85-89.

21 Il avait pu l'être ponctuellement auparavant autour d'un évêque bienfaiteur considéré comme patron par tous, comme dans le cas de Basile de Césarée.

citoyens, rassemblés par une même *origo*, et définis par des cultes communs. Mais vers 600, elle signifiait avant tout l'ensemble des habitants d'un territoire dépendant d'une ville où vivait leur évêque. On aboutit donc à un dilemme. Si on veut faire l'histoire de ce que désignent les termes de *civitas* et de *polis* sur la longue durée, il faut privilégier les sens de "ville", de "territoire", de "structure administrative", domaines qui furent assez peu marqués par le développement du christianisme ; dans ce cas, "la christianisation de la cité" disparaît faute de christianisation. En revanche, si on s'attache au sens premier de la cité comme ensemble de citoyens, structuré par des institutions et des cultes, alors, "la christianisation de la cité" disparaît faute de permanence de la cité ainsi définie. Le problème n'est donc pas celui de la christianisation de la cité, puisque celle-ci n'a pas subsisté comme cadre de référence, – et qu'on ne peut donc en écrire l'histoire puisqu'on ne parle plus de la même chose –, mais celui de la transformation d'une cité de citoyens en une communauté d'habitants très majoritairement chrétiens. Mais dans cette mutation d'une cité culturelle à une communauté sacramentelle, la christianisation ne fut qu'une des modalités, à côté de l'évolution de l'administration romaine, du pouvoir impérial, des élites, et des dynamiques économiques et démographiques. En revanche, la christianisation fut bien l'élément décisif d'une redéfinition mentale du rapport au monde et de la société. Et c'est pour cela qu'il faut construire un modèle qui intègre à la fois les réalités et les représentations, car la Cité, et ensuite l'Église, fut à la fois une réalité, un idéal et une idéologie. On propose donc d'affiner la chronologie ternaire proposée plus haut pour aboutir au tableau reproduit ci-dessous (p. 232-233), qui inclut, outre les évolutions générales, les réalités collectives locales, – religieuses, sociétales et administratives –, ainsi que les représentations païennes et chrétiennes, de ces réalités.

Ce tableau permet de visualiser un devenir complexe non linéaire. Il rend compte à la fois de la mutation de la définition de la société locale selon les époques et de la nécessité de prendre en compte différentes coordonnées, ce qui est impossible dans un discours écrit. C'est donc un outil herméneutique décisif pour la compréhension de ce qui s'est passé : l'affirmation de la communauté des chrétiens comme modèle sociétal dominant ne fut pas la christianisation de la cité antique, comme on le voit en comparant les colonnes 1-3 à la colonne 6. L'utilisation continue des termes de *polis* et de *civitas* ne doit pas faire illusion. Il y eut bien succession chronologique grâce à la persistance du territoire, de la population et de la ville, ainsi que de leurs dimensions administratives, judiciaires et fiscales²², mais il y eut discontinuité des

22 C'est cette continuité matérielle qui, agissant, malgré les évolutions démographiques, urbaines ou sociales, comme une causalité matérielle aristotélicienne, peut fonder une

dimensions sociétales et institutionnelles, à cause de la disparition progressive des spectacles, de l'évergétisme et des magistrats. Enfin, le discours chrétien sur l'histoire des cités créa une fausse continuité, distincte de celle des historiens d'aujourd'hui. Dans un article important²³, Aude Busine a proposé une typologie des attitudes des chrétiens envers le passé civique. Il y a d'abord l'acceptation des mythes païens, quitte à en modifier la signification par l'évhémérisme qui attribuait à des humains ce que le récit prêtait à des dieux, ou en insistant différemment sur tel ou tel mythe (on a là le même passé interprété différemment). On trouve ensuite la réappropriation d'un passé lointain en l'insérant dans une trame chronologique biblico-chrétienne par évhémérisme ou en le complétant par des faits religieux chrétiens, ou en transformant religieusement la signification des étymologies (on a alors un passé commun, mais différent car compris autrement). On a enfin la création d'un nouveau passé chrétien, fondé sur les martyrs, les saints et les évêques, véritables fondateurs de l'église locale. Ces trois démarches ne furent pas successives, mais contemporaines, et étaient autant de manières de christianiser le passé en le réinterprétant.

Le point commun de ces attitudes est qu'elles ne concernaient pas la cité comme institution, mais comme groupe d'habitants. Cela s'appuyait sur le fait qu'une cité était définie comme celle des Athéniens ou des Antiochiens. Mais ceci ne définissait pas seulement le groupe des habitants, mais également leur structure sociétale et institutionnelle, ce qui faisait que l'on avait une cité (*polis*, *civitas*) et non une tribu ou un peuple (*ethnos*, *gens*). Or, la relation chrétienne au passé local, qu'elle passe par l'interprétation ou par la création, ne concernait pas en réalité le passé civique, mais le passé des habitants chrétiens du présent, dont l'organisation en église était déterminante d'un point de vue chrétien. En réalité, le discours chrétien sur le passé local ne portait pas sur le passé civique, mais sur celui de la communauté chrétienne. Et l'utilisation du même terme de *polis* ou de *civitas* était ambiguë, car elle ne désignait plus la même réalité, ce qui signifiait qu'il n'y a pas eu continuité de la "cité". En effet, chez les auteurs païens, la cité renvoyait certes au groupe des habitants, mais aussi au corps des citoyens et à la structure institutionnelle. Mais chez les chrétiens, elle signifiait d'abord le groupe des habitants (en voie de conversion) et la structure institutionnelle (qui restait extérieure et profane, d'où la gêne

impression de continuité de la cité et crée ainsi la question de sa christianisation chez les historiens d'aujourd'hui. Mais il s'agit là d'un effet d'optique historique, différent toutefois de celui de la pseudomorphose de Spengler (qui concernerait la relation entre la discontinuité des structures et la continuité des représentations).

23 Busine (2014).

De la cité rituelle païenne à la communauté sacramentelle chrétienne (300-600)

Définition de la cité	1	2	3	4	5	5bis	6	6bis
	Vers 300	Vers 311/313-390	Vers 390-420	Vers 420-470	Vers 470-530	Vers 470-530	Vers 530	Vers 530
	300	vers 390	vers 420	vers 470	vers 530	Occident	Romania	vers 600
								Occident
Corps civique local défini par la participation obligatoire aux cultes civiques	X							
Corps civique local protégé par les dieux vénérés par les rites publics (représentation païenne)	X	X	X					
Partie locale du corps politique des citoyens romains définie par la participation obligatoire aux cultes de Rome et au culte impérial	X							
Corps social de concitoyens défini par la participation aux fêtes religieuses civiques	X							
Cellule administrative double (aspects locaux autonomes et charges impériales)	X	X	X	X	X		X	
Partie locale du corps politique des citoyens romains définie par la participation obligatoire au culte impérial		X	X	X	X		X	
Corps social de concitoyens défini par la participation aux fêtes religieuses (impériales, païennes, juives, chrétiennes)		X						

Définition de la cité	1	2	3	4	5	5bis	6	6bis
	Vers 311/313-300	Vers 390-390	Vers 390-420	Vers 420-470	Vers 470-530	Vers 470-530	Vers 530-600	Vers 530-600
					<i>Romania</i>	Occident	<i>Romania</i>	Occident
Communauté chrétienne dont les citoyens fondateurs sont les saints (représentation chrétienne)			X	X				
Corps social de concitoyens défini par la participation aux fêtes impériales, romaines profanes, chrétiennes, juives			X	X				
Corps civique local protégé par la vénération privée des divinités (représentation païenne)				X	X		X	(marginal)
Corps social de concitoyens défini par la participation aux fêtes impériales, romaines profanes, chrétiennes				X	X		X	
Communauté chrétienne dont les citoyens fondateurs sont des saints patrons (représentation chrétienne)				X	X	X	X	X
Corps social de concitoyens par la participation aux fêtes romaines profanes et chrétiennes					X	X		
Cellule administrative dédoublée, locale (évêque, curiales) et royale (comte)						X	X	X
Corps social de concitoyens par la participation aux fêtes chrétiennes								X

NB : on appelle ici *Romania* la zone de persistance de la civilisation romaine (qui regroupe l'Orient, l'Italie et l'Afrique) jusque vers 530-540, puis ensuite, l'empire de Justinien et de ses successeurs.

d'un Augustin) ; en revanche, le corps des citoyens, avec sa dimension sociétale hiérarchique et structurante définie par le recensement était remplacé par l'église comme communauté de fidèles soumise au clergé²⁴. On comprend ainsi comment on est passé d'un ensemble de citoyens à une communauté de fidèles, d'une cité rituelle à une communauté sacramentelle²⁵, d'une vie de la cité (des citoyens) à une vie des chrétiens dans la cité (comprise comme cadre administratif et religieux).

On peut ensuite tenter de nommer ces phases successives du passage de la cité cultuelle à la communauté sacramentelle, en sachant bien entendu que toute périodisation et toute nomenclature sont discutables. On peut proposer par exemple, en reprenant la numérotation du tableau²⁶ :

- 1: Cité cultuelle tétrarchique (vers 280-311/313) : il s'agit de la dernière phase de la cité classique, avec une généralisation du modèle institutionnel romain dans tout l'Empire et en particulier en Orient, définie par la norme cultuelle collective païenne
- 2: Cité neutralisée (311/313-391/394) : coexistence des communautés cultuelles païenne, juive et chrétienne, et des rites de chaque communauté
- 3: Cité neutre de transition : coexistence des communautés cultuelles chrétienne et juive, et interdiction des pratiques cultuelles païennes ; mais les païens continuent d'exister, discutent la pertinence des *tempora christiana* (en particulier en 410) et forment parfois des communautés religieuses nouvelles, non cultuelles ; cependant leur statut juridique se dégrade en termes d'accession aux postes impériaux, car l'administration romaine devient théoriquement réservée aux chrétiens (orthodoxes)
- 4: Cité neutre à dominante chrétienne : il n'y a pas d'obligation de conversion, mais les chrétiens deviennent majoritaires et ont plus de droits que les autres ; ils réinterprètent le passé des cités

24 Ce qui n'a pas empêché certains riches chrétiens de jouer les évergètes de leur communauté ni certains évêques généralement d'origine aristocratique de jouer les patrons de leur église, voire de leur cité. Mais ces aspects qui recyclaient certaines attitudes civiques sont restés marginaux, Lepelley (1998).

25 Toutes deux pourraient être définies comme des unités cultuelles, mais le culte ne jouait pas le même rôle : il exprimait la cité antique par la participation des citoyens et définissait l'église chrétienne par la communion des fidèles.

26 Ceci revient à préciser la périodisation ternaire de l'introduction : la "cité neutre" correspond à la phase 2, la "première cité chrétienne" aux phases 3-5-5bis, et la "seconde cité chrétienne" à la phase 6-6bis.

- 5 et 5 bis : Cité à hégémonie chrétienne : il n'y a toujours pas d'obligation de conversion, mais les chrétiens sont nettement majoritaires ; l'évêque voit ses pouvoirs locaux s'accroître, de fait, à cause de la disparition de l'administration romaine (après 470 en Gaule et en Espagne) et de droit après 500 dans la *Romania* ; l'encadrement chrétien des campagnes se développe
- 6 et 6 bis : Communauté sacramentelle, au sein d'une cité qui subsiste comme cadre administratif : il y a obligation de conversion des païens ; les juifs ont un statut juridique dégradé. On peut distinguer la communauté sacramentelle christianisée en Orient et la communauté sacramentelle épiscopale en Occident.

En conclusion, l'Antiquité tardive entre Constantin et Grégoire le Grand ou Muhammad, doit être comprise non comme une époque de transformation, ce qu'est par définition toute époque, mais comme une époque de transition, ce que n'est pas toute époque. En effet, on est bien passé d'une civilisation romaine fondée sur une articulation entre les cités et la cité impériale à une civilisation chrétienne fondée sur l'articulation des églises locales et de l'Église universelle. Dans les deux cas, même s'il n'avait pas la même définition, l'aspect religieux était essentiel dans le discours : car la dimension impériale était bien d'origine divine, comme la dimension ecclésiale. Mais pour passer d'un modèle à l'autre, il a fallu une époque de neutralité religieuse du discours, tant impérial que civique, qui fut celle d'une participation ludique fondée avant tout sur la romanité juridique et politique dont tous pouvaient se prévaloir. En effet, si on pouvait définir une cité vers 300 par ses aspects socio-économiques manifestés par le cens, ses aspects institutionnels et ses aspects culturels, la mise à l'écart puis la disparition de ces derniers modifia la définition de la cité. Celle-ci conserva ses dimensions socio-économiques, politico-administratives et sociétales, mais dut coexister avec diverses communautés religieuses. Le principe du lien entre une population, un territoire et un chef-lieu de pouvoir urbain fut maintenu, mais il fallut redéfinir autrement la manière dont la ville et son territoire subsistaient comme pôle principal d'identification de leurs habitants. Entre la cité rituelle païenne antique et la société sacramentelle chrétienne médiévale, la solution tardo-antique, originale, entre Constantin et Justinien, fut que le pouvoir impérial fonda à la fois la cohésion civique locale et le *consensus universorum* global, via les cérémonies et les spectacles, ce qui ne fut le cas ni avant, avec les dieux poliades et le culte de Rome et des empereurs, ni après, avec les saints locaux et les grandes fêtes de l'Église.

Ainsi, on passa progressivement d'une unité civique antique, – culturelle et politique –, à une dualité urbaine, – chrétienne et administrative. Dans cette

perspective, l'Antiquité tardive est bien une époque de transition, mais elle apparaît moins longue qu'on ne le pense généralement aujourd'hui. Entre le *déjà plus* du monde païen, et le *pas encore* de la chrétienté, le consensus civique local n'exista alors, via la fête des kalendes, ou les jeux scéniques et du cirque, que médiatisé par l'Empire. Et l'absence d'unité culturelle est une des raisons qui explique que l'on ne se soit jamais autant défini comme Romain qu'aux IV^e et V^e siècles. C'est ce qu'exprima le mot nouveau de *Romania*, qui apparut vers 330 et se diffusa après 380, au moment où les Orientaux chrétiens se définirent comme Romains pour ne plus s'appeler "Hellènes", – qui désignait de plus en plus les "païens" –, et où les empereurs chrétiens abandonnaient le titre de *Pontifex Maximus*.

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